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CHANDAMAMA

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And News Flash, Let Us Know
and More!

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THE MAGIC PALACE: Mahendranath finds his job as gatekeeper quite exciting, as he finds the young lady in the garden someone different from the other women-folk. Can she be the missing princess? He gets an opportunity to call out her name. She faces him, but cautions him against speaking aloud. She almost whispers: "Tomorrow!" What has she in store for him? Mahendranath wonders. Will she help him unravel some of the mysterious happenings in that huge mansion?

VEER HANUMAN: On the advice of Jambava, Hanuman flies towards the Himalayas and returns with the medicinal plants which alone can revive Rama and Lakshmana. They come out of their swoon. Sugriva asks the Vanara soldiers to storm the city of Lanka as they do not expect any resistance from the Rakshasas, because they are under the impression that Indrajit has killed their enemy – the two brothers. When he comes to know that they are very much alive, he plans another strategy – to bring someone looking like Sita to the battlefield and announce that she is dead. Vibhishana is able to see through his game.

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Time to share one's happiness

All over the world, around Christmas, people get busy sending cards to their friends and relatives, conveying their greetings of the season. That is the time when post offices are flooded with these cards, and they strive their best to reach the messages containing good wishes promptly to the addressees.

Generally, the words of wishes run like these: "Merry Christmas" and "A happy and prosperous New Year". Some people do remember to add words connected with 'peace' to their wishes.

What prompts people to think of happiness and peace on such an occasion? It is inherent in man that he wants to share his joy with others. May be a smile appears on his face first; if he cannot control himself, he may give out a cry of joy, which attracts other people to him. A smile, when seen by others, is invariably infectious, whereas a cry of joy will evoke a similar response, followed by a hug or a handshake. And when one expresses his joy in words, it is again a symbol of his desire to share his own happiness.

One can secure happiness by not being cruel to others – not even in thoughts – by expressing compassion to anybody in distress; and by showing respect towards righteous people and admiration for virtuous acts.

Peace is a direct result of such sharing of happiness. When there is equality among men, peace will prevail. And it is this feeling of equality that manifests itself in the shape of cards and messages carrying wishes. It is not as though such wishes have necessarily to wait for Christmas, New Year, and other occasions. One's thoughts should every day be for the well-being of everybody else.

PEACE AWARD FOR
GUATEMALAN INDIAN

GUATEMALA

ZACAPA

The Nobel Peace Prize has, for the second time in succession, gone to a woman crusader. Last year, it was Mrs. Aung Suu Kyi of Myanmar (former Burma). This year, the Award went to Ms. Rigoberta Menchu of Guatemala, now in self-exile in Mexico.

The Award citation says: "Ms. Menchu stands out as a vivid symbol of peace and reconciliation across ethnic, cultural, and social dividing lines, in her own country, on the American continent, and in the World."

Ms. Menchu was born 33 years ago into a poor family, which was caught in the crossfire during the civil war that raged in Guatemala for three decades. Like several Central and South American countries, Guatemala too experienced great tension between the descendants of the European immigrants and the local Indian population. During the 1970s and '80s, this tension reached a climax when there was large-scale repression of the native Indians. In the 1980 massacre, Ms. Menchu lost her



father, mother, and one brother, who were done away with by the army and the rich landowners..

She was just about 20 years at that time, but she took up the cause of the natives and their rights. Naturally, she had to clash with the Guatemalan military authority and had to resort to guerilla tactics. The Rightist security forces had by then earned notoriety by killing more than 50,000 Guatemalans – many of them Indians. Till to date, over 120,000 have lost their lives in the 30-year conflict.



Though it is conceded that Ms. Menchu's activities have not been entirely devoid of violence, her policies have been marked by reconciliation. Taken as a whole, her overall work is believed to have contributed to the development of human rights in a peaceful way.

A representative of the Nobel Awards Committee remarked: "We hope one of the effects of the award (to Ms. Menchu) will be a better understanding of indigenous peoples in America and around the world."

Coincidentally, the Award to Ms. Menchu has come when the Americas-North, Central, and South- were celebrating the arrival of the European navigator, Christopher Columbus, exactly 500 years ago, in what came to be subsequently called the Americas. As Columbus had set out in search of a route to India, the people whom he came across in the regions where he landed came to be called "Indians". It has now come to light that even Columbus had persecuted these people to achieve his own ends, and ever since then, the natives had suffered oppression and repression at

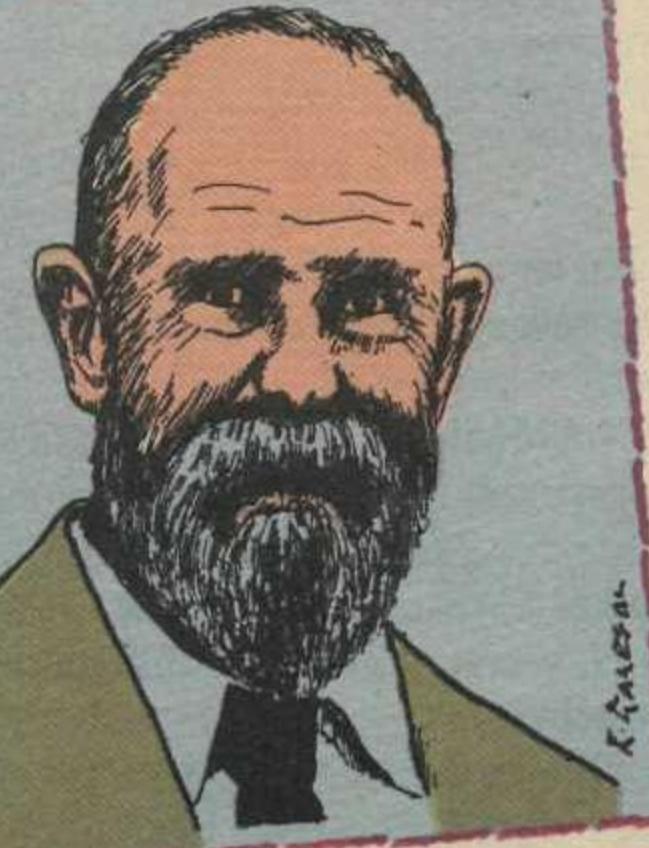
one time or another, in some form or another. "The voices of those who had disappeared and who were killed are crying out for justice. We don't have to live as if we belonged to the past. There are still more pages of history to be written." This comment came from Ms. Menchu, when she came to know of the Award for her.

Incidentally, the United Nations has named 1993 as the International Year for Indigenous Populations, and Ms. Menchu is a member of the U.N. working group on indigenous populations.

She is the ninth woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize ever since it was instituted. India's Mother Teresa was given the Award in 1979.

The other Nobel laureates of 1992 are Prof. Georges Charpak of France (Physics), Prof. Rudolf A. Marcus of the U.S.A. (Chemistry), Prof. Edmund Fischer and Dr. Edwin Krebs of the U.S.A. (Medicine), Prof. Gary F. Becker, U.S.A. (Economics) and Mr. Derek Walcott of West Indies (Literature).





"Lord Has Faith in You!"

Before he came over to India and took part in the freedom struggle, Englishman Charles Andrews had chosen a locality in London, full of notorious characters, to work among the people. He had just then come out of college and abounded in enthusiasm, sincerity, and devotion.

One day, he met a drunkard and wanted to wean him away from his habit: "My good friend, please don't drink."

"You give me one good reason," the man responded, rather mockingly.

"It's bad for you." Young Charles found that the man was not convinced. So he prayed, "O, Lord Christ, forgive this man and bless him!"

"You're a fool!" the man told Charles Andrews without batting an eyelid. "What makes you think that He'll forgive me? You take it from me, I've no trust in Him!" he added angrily.

"Whether you've faith in Lord Christ or not, He has full faith in you, my brother!" said Andrews, full of compassion. "I foresee a day when you'll leave wine."

"What did you say? He has faith in me?" the man's voice was choked with some remorse. "Are you sure?"

"Of course, I'm dead certain!" Charles Andrews assured him.

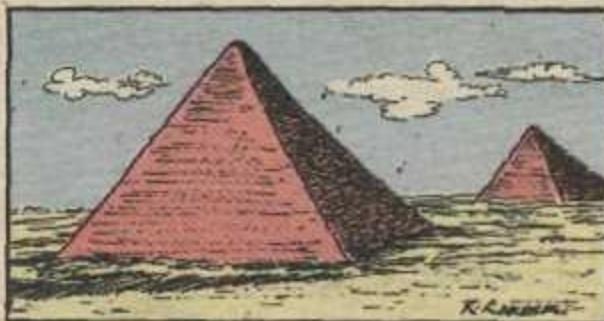
"Believe me, my good friend," the man caught hold of Andrews's hands, "I'm parting company with wine—today!"

You know how Indians called Charles Andrews? "Deenabandhu"—friend of the poor.

NEWS FLASH

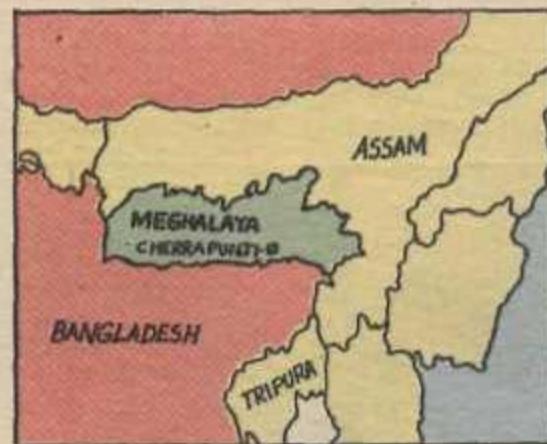
QUAKE-HIT PYRAMIDS

For the first time in recorded history, the pyramids of Egypt have been damaged by an earthquake. Considered one of the ancient wonders of the world, the pyramids are an architectural marvel and were constructed to enclose royal tombs—like the Great Pyramid of Khufu at Gizeh, near Cairo—or used as the base for a shrine to a god—like the Tower of Babel. The pyramids of both Khufu and Cheops in the Gizeh plateau suffered external damage in the earthquake that hit Cairo on October 19. The world's oldest six-step pyramid in Sakkara and the pyramid of Chephren both had some stones displaced. Efforts are now on to save these showpieces of Egyptian heritage from further damage.



A RAINING (REIGNING) RECORD

Which place in the world receives the highest rainfall? Cherrapunji, in Meghalaya? No. After a seven-year gap, the record has come back to India, so to say. Mawsynram, also in Meghalaya, has recorded the mean annual rainfall at 11,873 mm. Cherrapunji held the record till 1985, when statistics showed that Waileale in

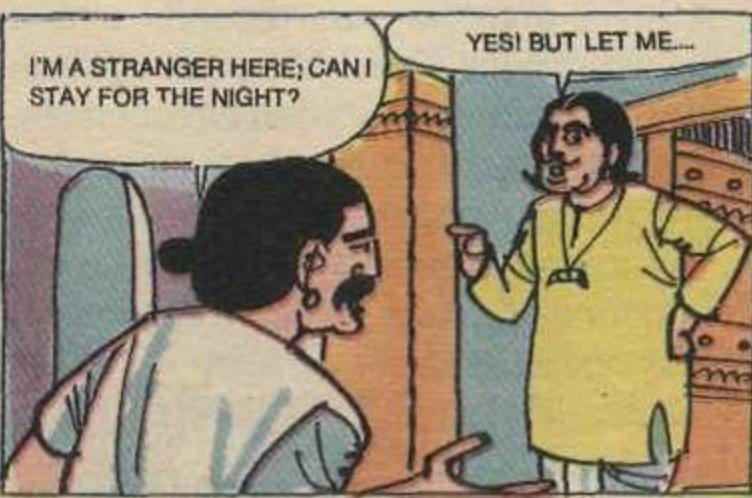
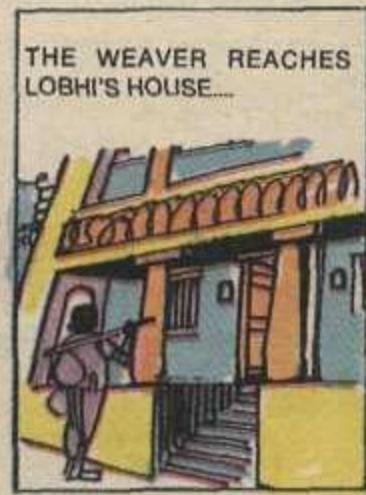
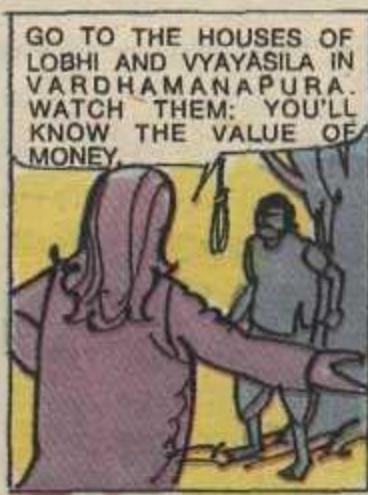
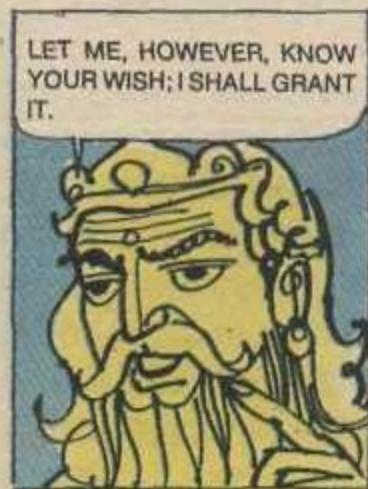


Hawaii, U.S.A., had received more rain. Latest data, however, have put both these places behind Mawsynram, 16 km from Cherrapunji (11,314 mm). Waileale recorded 11,438 mm. Mawsynram experiences rainfall for nearly 150 days in a year. It received 989.6 mm of rain on a single day (July 10, 1952). This 40-year-old record for India still holds good. Similarly, Cherrapunji holds the world record for the highest rainfall for 12 months, six months, and one month.

DID YOU HEAR A 'HELLO'?

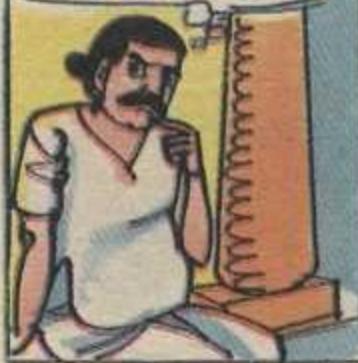
A giant antenna was recently aimed skyward by the American space agency, NASA, to search for possible alien life. The 34-metre wide dish antenna, erected in California's Mojave desert, has started scanning the skies for radio frequencies which, when deciphered, may indicate signs of alien life. One can imagine the NASA scientists vying with each other to catch the first "hello"—in whatever language it comes!



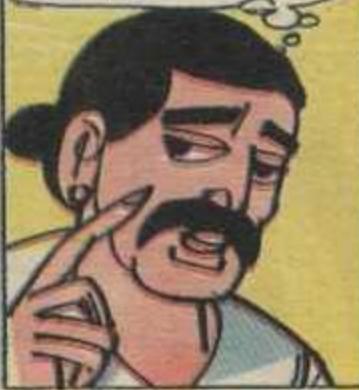


वाच्यावाच्यं प्रकुपितो न विजानति कर्हिचित् ।
नाकार्यमस्ति कद्भस्य नावाच्यं विद्यते कवचित् ॥

THEY DIDN'T GIVE ME ANYTHING TO EAT; THEY COULD HAVE AT LEAST UTTERED A KIND WORD.



THEY QUARREL FOR NOTHING. LET ME GO TO VYAYASILA.



HE GOES TO THE OTHER HOUSE



WELCOME, SIR! I'M HONOURED BY YOUR VISIT.

THANK YOU, SIR! MAY I STAY FOR THE NIGHT?



MAKE YOURSELF COMFORTABLE. TREAT THIS AS YOUR OWN HOME.



THANK YOU SO MUCH. YOU'RE VERY KIND!



HE'S POORER THAN LOBHI, YET HOW KIND AND HOSPITABLE IS HE!



THE WEAVER RETURNS TO HIS VILLAGE.



O GOD! GRANT ME THIS BOON! LET ME LIVE LIKE VYAYASILA!

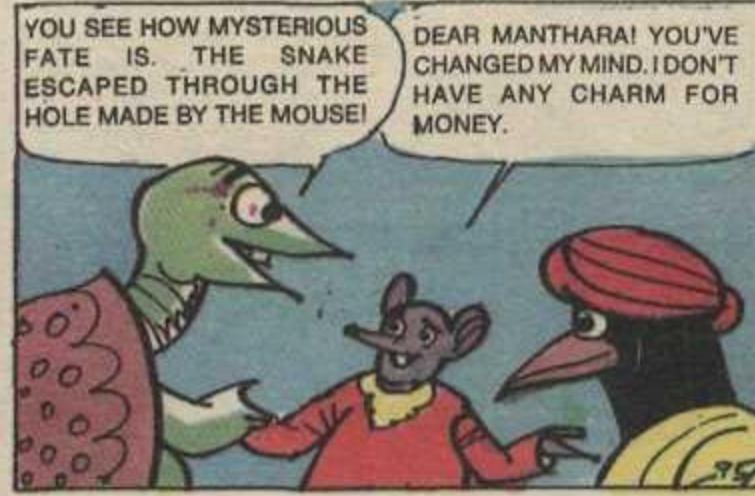
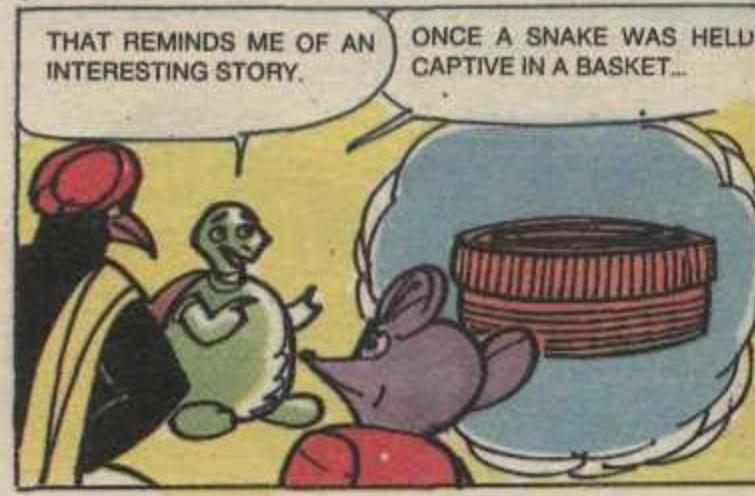


MANTHARA CONCLUDES THE STORY....



SO, HIRANYAKA, YOU SEE HOW THE WEAVER REALISED THE VALUE OF MONEY AND LIVED HAPPILY.

One who loses his temper loses his power of judgment too. He is no mood to understand what is right and what is wrong. He does not know what he is doing or speaking.



शनैः पन्थाः शनैः कन्था शनैः पर्वतलङ्घनम् ।
शनैर्विद्या शनैर्वित्तं पञ्चैतानि शनैः शनैः ॥ ॥



To Continue

A journey is possible only step by step, a quilt is made stitch by stitch, a hill is climbed step by step, knowledge and wealth are acquired bit by bit. These five things can happen only gradually.



NOTHING BUT BLUNDER

When S.J. Ravi Prakash, of S.V. Puram, came out of the birthday party, his brother pulled him up. "That was a *faux pas*." He was referring to his brother's indiscreet remark about a painting that he saw in the drawing room of their old college-mate. He had called it a 'cheap copy', failing to notice the embarrassment on her face and that of her husband. His brother told him, it was a costly birthday gift to his class-mate from her husband. But he could not understand what his brother was calling 'to pa'. *Faux pas*, in French, literally means false step; nowadays the expression refers to a socially embarrassing action or mistake, or a social blunder. While both singular and plural forms have the same spelling, in plural 's' in *pas* is pronounced. When one does something foolish, tactless, or embarrassing, or commits a blunder, it is also idiomatically expressed : *to put one's foot in it*. Here's yet another word : *gaffe*!



Words like 'knife', 'know', 'pneumonia', 'psalm', and 'pseudonym', baffle M.D. Vinod Kumar Raju of Hyderabad. How does one know of silent letters when we pronounce unfamiliar words? he asks. English is a language with the smallest alphabet. When we speak English, all possible sounds have to be made with the help of just these 26 letters. The five vowels help us in formulating these sounds, but when any one of them is absent between certain combinations of consonants (kn, ps), one of them falls silent, invariably the first of the 2-letter combination.



THE MAGIC PALACE

9

(Mahendranath strikes an instant friendship with the gatekeeper at the Magic Palace. A day after his arrival there, the young man, who is determined to find the missing Princess Vidyavati, mingles with the servants and strays into some of the rooms. In one, he finds three pundits who do not take kindly to him. His friend the gate-keeper brings him good news of a job for him – to guard the gates on the side where the womenfolk stay. Back in Veergiri, everybody is anxious, as more than a week has passed without any word of the Princess.)

"Almost a week has gone by, my lord, since Vidyavati disappeared," wailed Queen Vajreswari in the presence of King Veerasen. "Hasn't anybody brought any news?"

The king was really at a loss to know how he would pacify the queen. "Ugrasen has despatched his men all over the kingdom, my queen," said Veerasen. "Some of

them have come back without any information. The others are yet to return. Some of our subjects, too, have ventured out on a search for the princess. It's just a question of time."

"Yes, you were telling me about some young man who came to ask your permission," Vajreswari reminded her husband.

"Oh, Mahendranath?" said

IS JAGATPATI INVOLVED ?





Veerasen. "He, too, must have already left. He appeared very brave and adventuresome. Ugrasen is taking care of his old mother, and so he must have gone without any worry to bother him. I won't be surprised at all if he were to come back first with some news. He was quite determined."

"I'm only afraid whether Vidyavati has been taken out of the kingdom, far far away from us, my lord," Vajreswari expressed her doubts.

"Even that possibility has been considered, my queen," replied Veerasen. "Your brother has alerted

his spies in the neighbouring kingdoms, and if she is anywhere there, they would trace her out. Any delay shouldn't worry us, Vajreswari. We should be more concerned about Vidyavati's safety. Anyway, her bad period will soon pass and she would be back amongst us. We haven't seen Acharya Vachaspati for some days. I shall send for the Raj Jyotishi today."

When the Raj Jyotishi arrived, he was not alone, but was accompanied by a young man. "I was even otherwise about to start for the palace, your majesty, when your messenger came," Acharya Vachaspati told King Veerasen and Vajreswari. Introducing the stranger, he said, "He's one of my disciples, Madanmohan. He brought me some news and I thought you should also know it."

"Is it about our daughter, Jyotishi?" asked Queen Vajreswari anxiously. "I hope she's all right."

Before Acharya Vachaspati could reply her, Madanmohan said, "In a way it's about the princess, your highness. For the past few days, I've been going from one place to another, meeting Jyotishis and clearing my doubts and improving my knowledge. One or two of them were telling me that Acharya Jagatpati had in-



vited them for a discussion about the princess's horoscope. I had earlier met Acharya Jagatpati once or twice at my guru's place, and so I went to give him the news. The Raj Jyotishi tells me he has not been invited!"

"I never expected such a strange behaviour from Jagatpati," Acharya Vachaspati added, expressing his disappointment. "His sudden disappearance soon after the kidnapping of the princess was baffling enough, and I was wondering what had happened to him, your majesty. I had discussed Vidyavati's horoscope threadbare with him, and I don't find any reason why he should consult other Jyotishis in Veergiri."

King Veerasen, who was silently listening to Acharya Vachaspati and Madanmohan, suddenly interjected. "Jyotishiji, how well do you know this Jagatpati? Is he a sincere person? Can we depend on him? After his discussion with other Jyotishis, he may come up with new predictions. We must be well guarded against them. After all, you've scrutinised the horoscope thoroughly and you feel that Vidyavati's bad period is in the wane. Anyway, don't forget to bring Jagatpati here whenever he comes to you next."

"As you say, your majesty," the



Raj Jyotishi assured him. "He used to meet me frequently, and I had had no occasion to doubt his erudition or sincerity. However, his sudden disappearance has really put me out. I'm not much bothered about his not inviting me to the discussion. It merely shows that he has something to hide from me. I'm only worried on that count, your majesty. When he comes, I won't give him any hint of our fear, but shall bring him here."

After the Raj Jyotishi had departed along with his disciple, King Veerasen conferred with the Commander-in-Chief and told him briefly of what he had heard from Acharya



Vachaspati and his disciple. "Somehow or other, your majesty," said Ugrasen, "right from the beginning I had an inkling that this Acharya Jagatpati would be able to throw some light on the princess's disappearance. He seems to have taken an undue interest in Vidyavati's horoscope. I'm only wondering whether we had played into his hands without realising so. I didn't inform Acharya Vachaspati, but my enquiries regarding Jagatpati's residence here have not borne fruit. He's a mysterious character. We should be alert about him."

"Have you received any news from Mahendranath?" the king asked

of Ugrasen. "I hope his mother is being looked after well."

"Yes, your majesty," replied the Commander-in-Chief. "She has been given proper company, so that she is never alone, and her daily needs are being met from the palace. I'm also constantly checking with her for news of her son. He has not come back as yet."

"I can't explain why," King Veerasen remarked, "but I seem to have a lot of faith in him. I wish he succeeds in his venture."

Meanwhile, Mahendranath did not find his job as gate-keeper tiresome, though he kept awake the whole night. The stone seat near the gate was comfortable only for some time. He then walked up and down the pathway between the gate and the garden, which was terraced, unlike the garden on the other side where he had seen the master of the mansion. At first, he could see light in several rooms downstairs and in just one or two rooms upstairs. The lights there remained for a longer while than in the rooms below. In one room upstairs, the light was on for a still longer time.

Early in the morning, his friend came to find out how he had managed the first night in his job. He took Mahendranath through another

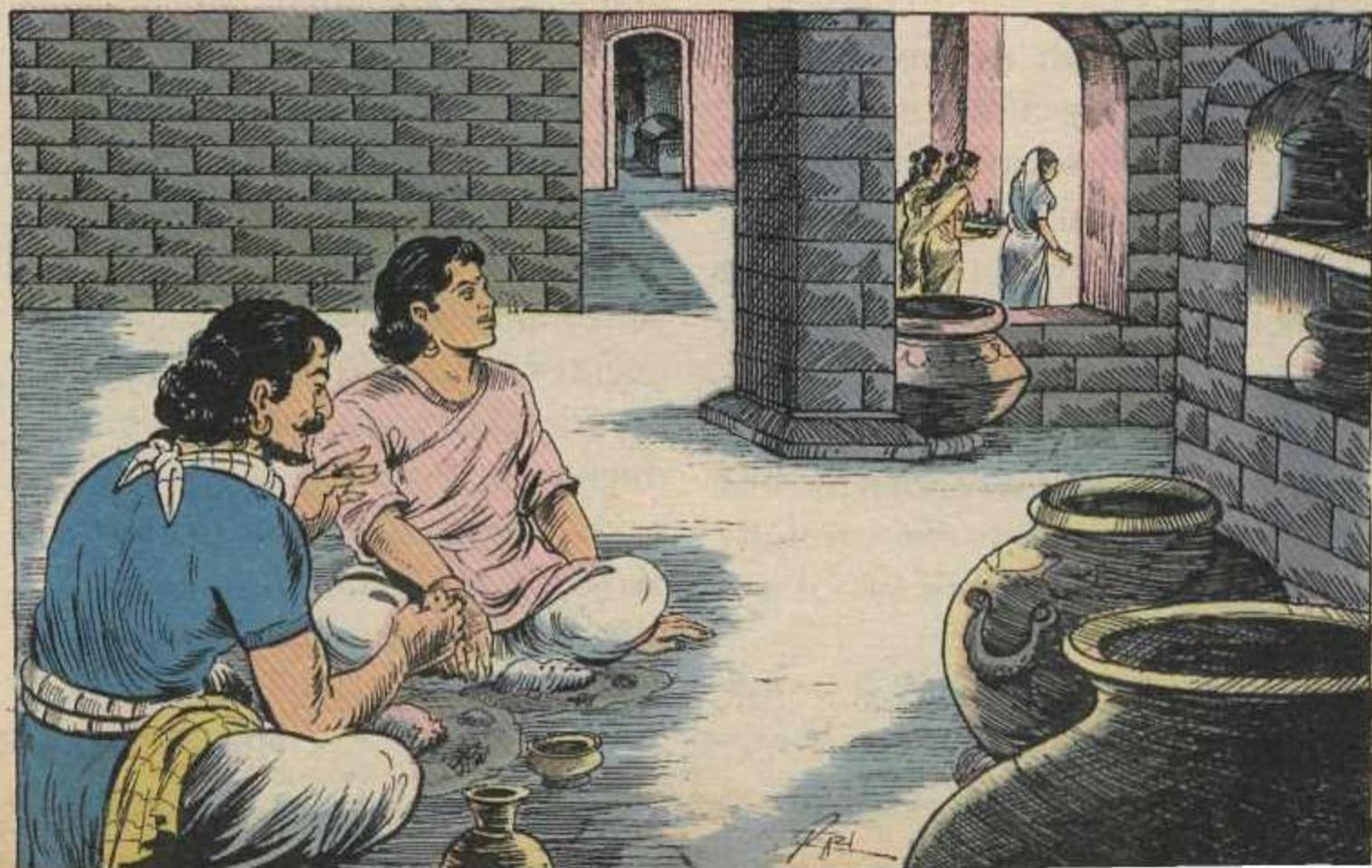


wing of the huge building, to a room where food was being served. He guessed that they were in the common dining hall where all those working in the mansion were expected to assemble for their food. He also guessed that the adjoining room must be the kitchen, when he saw an old woman and two girls coming out, holding trays of food. The woman was wearing a white sari and had covered her head with it. The way she led the girls and talked to them was rather commanding. They were dressed alike, in the same colours and wore similar ornaments. They looked like twins.

Much before sunset, Mahendranath started for his post. He did not

wait for his friend to come and tell him when his duty would start. In fact, he did not come into the room at all that day, except for once, and probably he found Mahendranath asleep and did not disturb him.

As he walked up to the gate or the other side, Mahendranath was wondering whether someone might stop him as he was new to the place. He met one or two servants on the way and they passed him smiling. They might have seen him with the gate-keeper and taken him to be one of the several employees in the place. Mahendranath straight away went to the seat. He remembered he had not seen anybody in the garden as he approached the pathway to the gate.



It was still bright all around. From his seat, he was unable to see much of the building, except a portion of the upstairs. A peep at the windows could not reveal any activity, though at one time he thought he did hear voices in the garden. He got up from his seat and walked up along the pathway when he noticed first the elderly woman he had seen in the dining hall earlier and, a second later, a young lady slowly walking in the garden and caressing the flowers with tenderness. What struck him was, she had the same attire and ornaments as those he had seen on the girls with the old woman in the morning. Only, this girl was definitely more charming than the other two.

Mahendranath ensured that he was not seen by either of them. He walked up and down the pathway to give the appearance that he was someone on duty, but every time he went up the path, he shot a glance at the two ladies who, strangely, were not conversing with each other. The old woman, who was seated most of the time, seemed to be carefully following the movements of the young lady.

Presently, he saw one of the girls approach the old woman and tell her

something. The woman then asked her to stay back and left the place, without a word to the young lady. This time, he was not surprised when he saw the girl and the young lady looking like twins. After the old woman had departed, the girl tried to strike a conversation with the young lady who, however, seemed not very keen on talking to her. So, the girl left the young lady to move among the plants and flowers and enjoy the evening. Just before it was dark, the girl led her up the steps on to the verandah and the two disappeared. A little later, Mahendranath noticed light in one of the rooms upstairs – but definitely not the room where he had seen light the previous night. And the room remained lit up for a long while. And then it was all dark.

As he waited for his friend the gate-keeper to turn up with his food, Mahendranath surmised that the young lady was either the important guest of the master as mentioned by his friend or someone else equally important, from the way she was being looked after by the old woman and the girl. However, what baffled him was the young lady's appearance as well as that of the two girls, he had seen in the premises. Even if



he were to go near them, would he be able to distinguish them? he wondered.

As expected, the gatekeeper came with his food. Mahendranath had by then decided to keep to himself all that he had noticed and seen, and pretended that everything was normal. "The place is very quiet. Has your master left?" Mahendranath ventured a query, very casually. "No, no!" responded the gatekeeper. "He's very much here. I'm told he's busy with those pundits who came with him. He may not come this side at all, but better be alert!"

"Does he know that I'm put on duty here?" asked Mahendranath.

"Yes, when I mentioned to him that a strong young man has come in search of work," the gatekeeper explained, "he at once agreed to engage you. Ever since his guest came to stay here, I've been on duty this

side. There was someone else in charge of the other gate till my master was here. Day before yesterday, that man took ill suddenly and I was substituting for him when you came and knocked. Fortunately, I was present when master turned up later in the night. As the pundits were with him, he never enquired about anything. I'm told his guest is a princess from a far-off land. She may remain here till her bad period is over."

Mahendranath listened to his friend carefully, trying to remember all the details that he mentioned. He was careful that he did not give his friend any indication of his special interest in this guest. "Yes, I should be extra alert, if ever the master were to come this side," he merely assured his friend.

-To continue



IT MADE ALL THE DIFFERENCE

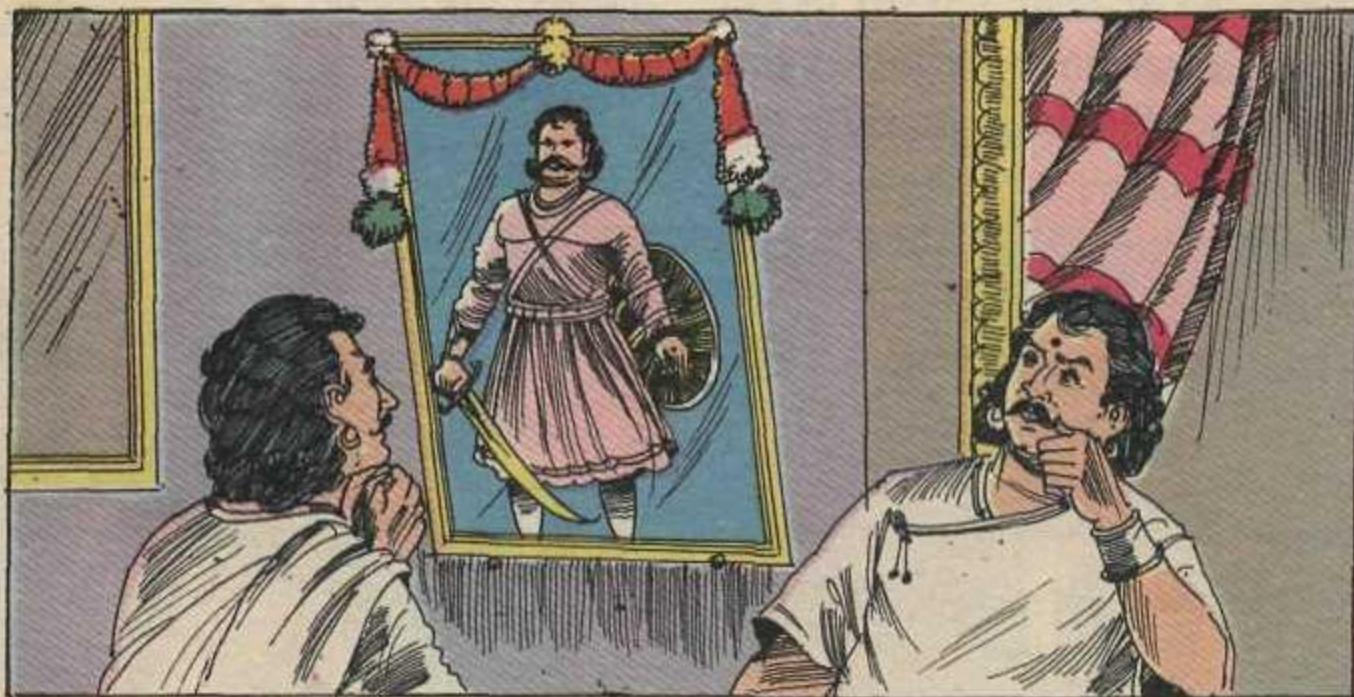
After an illustrious career in the army, Rajendran was leading a retired life. Once he happened to visit that city, where he strayed into a grocery store. He did not go there to buy anything, but was attracted by a portrait that hung from the wall. It was that of a well-built soldier sporting a thick moustache and holding a shining sword.

As he stood there staring at the painting, the grocer approached him. "He lived some two hundred years ago. He earned glory when he killed a hundred-and-fifty enemy soldiers in a battle. Would you like to take it? I'll charge only a hundred rupees."

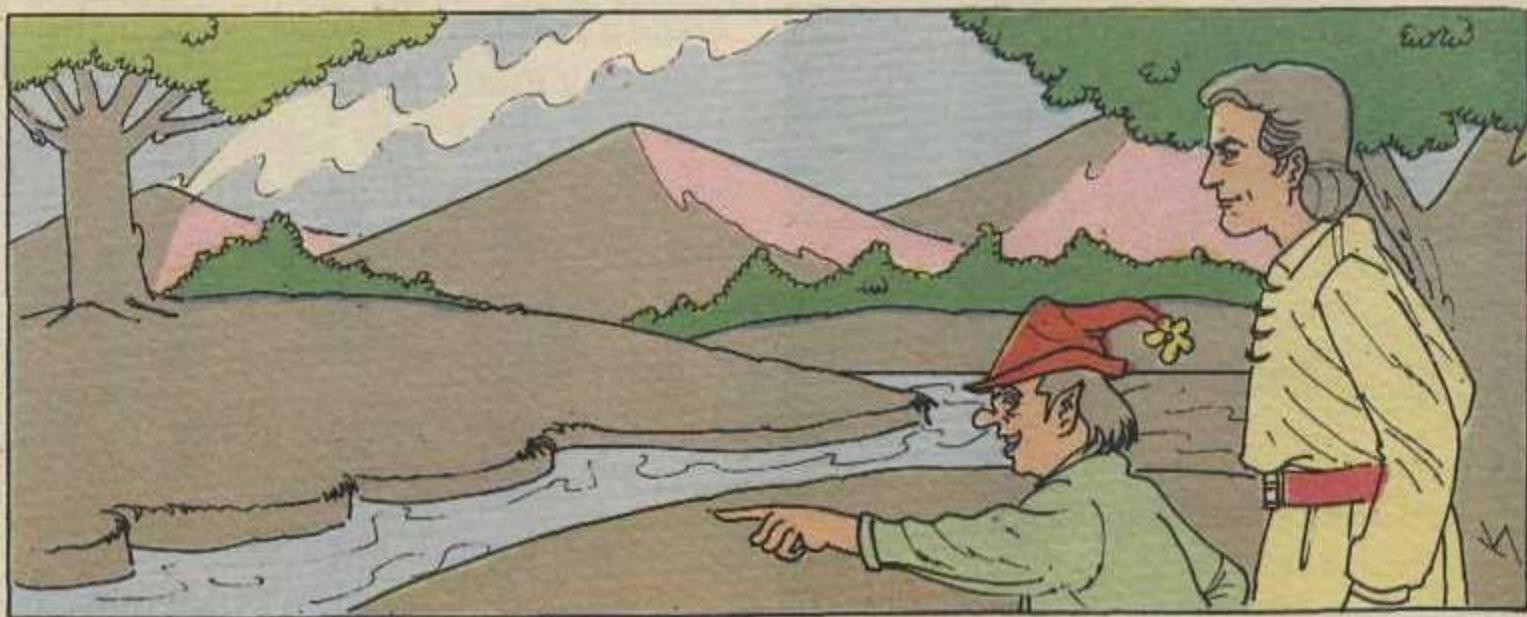
Rajendran counted the money he had with him. Only ninety rupees; and the grocer was not willing to reduce the price. So, Rajendran went away without buying the painting. A few months later, he called on his friend who had just then retired from the army. Wonder of wonders! In Gajendran's drawing room, he saw the portrait of the brave soldier. He could not take his eyes off from the painting.

"Do you know who it is?" said Gajendran with pride. "He's my grandfather. He was a great soldier; he killed a hundred-and-fifty soldiers in a single encounter!"

'Ah! If only I had ten rupees more with me that day, he would have become my grandfather!' mused Rajendran to himself.



THE LITTLE GOOD GNOME



In old, old days, there lived on the forest's edge and beside a pretty lake, a gnome called Teimko. He had a short plump body, bandy legs, and he dressed himself in the brightest of colours and sported a long pointed cap on his head, with a tiny flower dangling from its tip. Indeed, he thought himself to be very, very clever! He liked to spend his time in the nearby village and prided on being a great deal smarter than human beings.

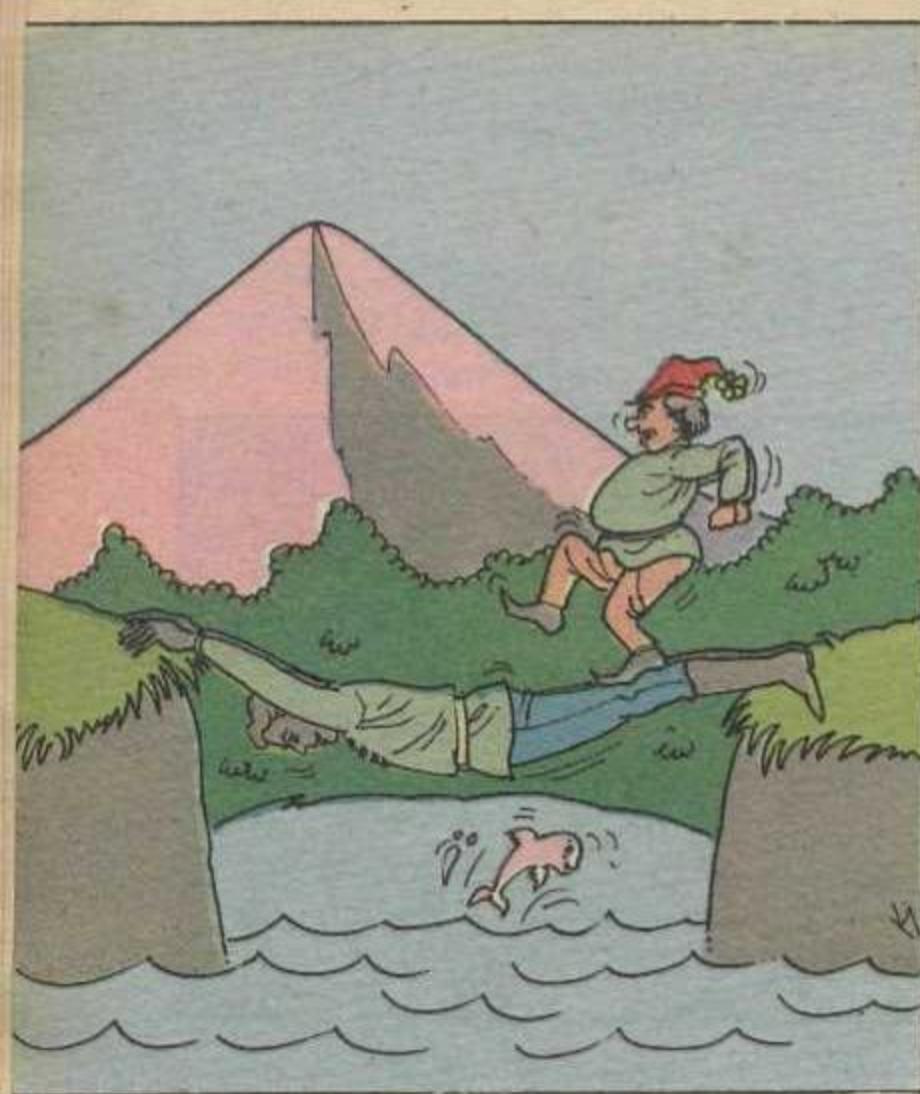
Teimko was particularly friendly with the miller named Polky, whom he tried to outwit whenever he got a chance to do so. One fine day, as both were strolling down the hilly

meadow, the dwarf said to his friend, "You claim to have a very intelligent mind. Now, can you make me a bridge over the brook yonder? But neither wood, nor stone, nor metal can you use to build it."

Polky thought for a while and scratched his head. He observed that the stream was quite narrow. So he lowered himself over it, face downwards, his feet on one bank and the hands on the other.

"Here's your bridge, Teimko, not of wood, nor stone, nor metal, but of one, breathing with life. Come on, just walk over it," said the miller looking up through the corner of his eyes.





The moment the dwarf was on his back, he shook him off and the little fellow tumbled into the water with a splash.

Teimko was determined to outdo the miller when the very next opportunity came.

Once there was feasting at the village chief's house on the occasion of his daughter's marriage. As Polky was very popular for his jovial character and enjoyed such social gatherings, the naughty gnome thought it a good idea to prevent him from attending it. "Dear Friend," he said, going up to him, "promise me, you'll do me a favour. I would trust no one

else."

"I promise," replied Polky, a little flattered by the dwarf's words.

"This evening I've an important engagement. Would you mind standing guard over my door, while I'm away? As you know, there are sackfuls of gold and silver in my house. You should not leave the door till I return," said Teimko, with much concern.

"But where're you going, by the way?" asked his friend.

"To the wedding feast."

"But I, too, wouldn't like to miss it!" said Polky, who had completely forgotten about the invitation.

"But you've promised, haven't you?"

Polky stood silent.

"So, see you then and on no account should you leave my door," said the gnome, with much emphasis, and pranced off, happy that this time he had the better of the miller.

It did not take long for Polky to realise that he had been tricked by Teimko. He thought and thought and finally had a bright idea.

Taking the door off its hinges, he put it on his back and hastened away. In that manner he entered the gay wedding party to everyone's amusement. Teimko, who was thoroughly



enjoying himself, rushed to him and shouted angrily, "You've broken your promise. Didn't you give me your word that you wouldn't leave my door alone even for a single instant during my absence?"

"Well, my dear, neither have I!" replied Polky, with a smile. "Here's your door and here I am, both together!"

Teimko had to acknowledge that his friend was smarter and gave him a good shake of the hands.

It so happened that one day the miller was in great need of money. He knew the dwarf had a lot of wealth that he had once entrusted to his custody. It would do him no harm if he managed to get some of his riches for himself, he thought. Through the forest he came whistling a merry tune and sat on the bank of the lake in front of the gnome's hut. The moment he heard his heavy footsteps and croak-like hum, he leaned down and began gulping the water of the lake.

"You must be dying of thirst," remarked the dwarf. "Come in, I'll give you a very refreshing drink of pure grape juice."

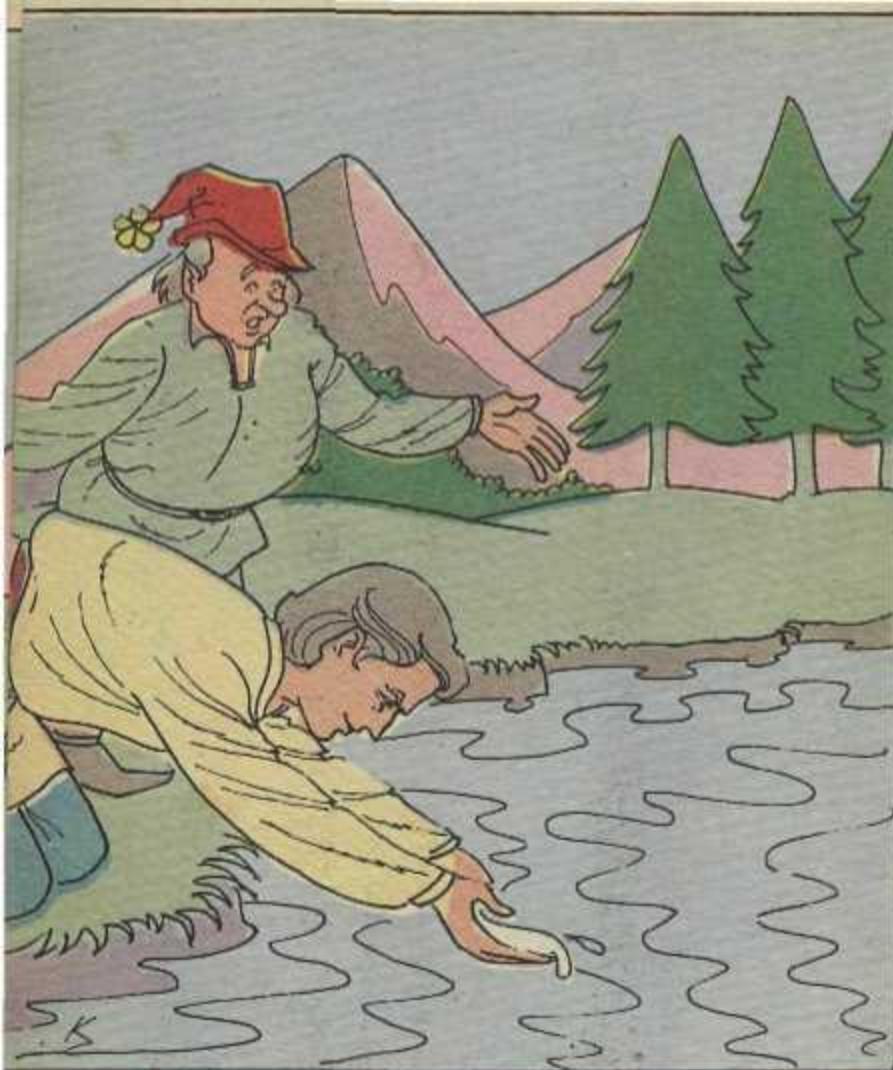
"No, I'm not drinking the water to quench my thirst; but I want to drink the entire lake dry. You see it



is like this, Teimko. Whenever I want to go somewhere, this lake comes in my way. I've no boat to cross it and I'm forced to take the longer route. That steals most of my precious time. You know, I'm a busy man. Besides, I'm really anxious that one day or the other someone will drown in it. Therefore I've decided to drink all the water and get rid of the lake once for all," replied Polky and, leaning forward, began lapping the water once again.

The gnome's face turned sad. "Please don't do such a thing," he pleaded. "I love the pretty lake and can't live without it. If you don't





drink it dry, I'll give you some gold pieces to make yourself a handy boat."

"Do you really mean it? But I'll need quite a large amount of your gold for all the trouble I've suffered on account of the pretty wretched lake of yours. Better make haste, I can wait no longer," said the villager, pretending to be impatient.

Teimko hurried into his house as fast as his bandy little legs could carry him. For he was really afraid that the miller might drink the lake dry before he got back. But the lake was, of course, still there playing in the sun when he returned. Polky

danced his way home with quite a heavy sack on his back.

One night a gale blew the roof off Teimko's house. He needed help to put a new one. He naturally approached Polky and promised him to fill his hat with silver.

"Your money is rather heavy," said the clever man, after the work was done, "and my one and only hat is rather old. Better I rest it on a stump, while you fill it, lest it gave way."

So the dwarf began to pour the money, as his friend held the hat over the stump. "Your hat seems to hold a lot!" said he, as he finished emptying the third bag of silver. The fourth bag at last filled it to the brim.

"Your head must be quite large and so is your hat! You must be really wise, then," said Teimko, rather sorry to lose so much of his wealth.

But the miller, bidding good-bye, walked home with a merry heart, happy that the simple Simon did not know that there was a hole in his hat and the stump he had chosen was hollow to the root.

Little Teimko never stopped boasting about his strength. One day, Polky thought of teaching him a lesson and proposed a contest.



"Let's begin by breaking a stone with fingers," suggested the gnome, proudly displaying his thick knotty hands. He picked up a white cobblestone. Polky, too, found one and slipped it in his pocket. Teimko squeezed it with all his might till tears began to trickle down his face. But the stone did not even crack.

"Don't laugh, you too won't fare better," he said to his friend.

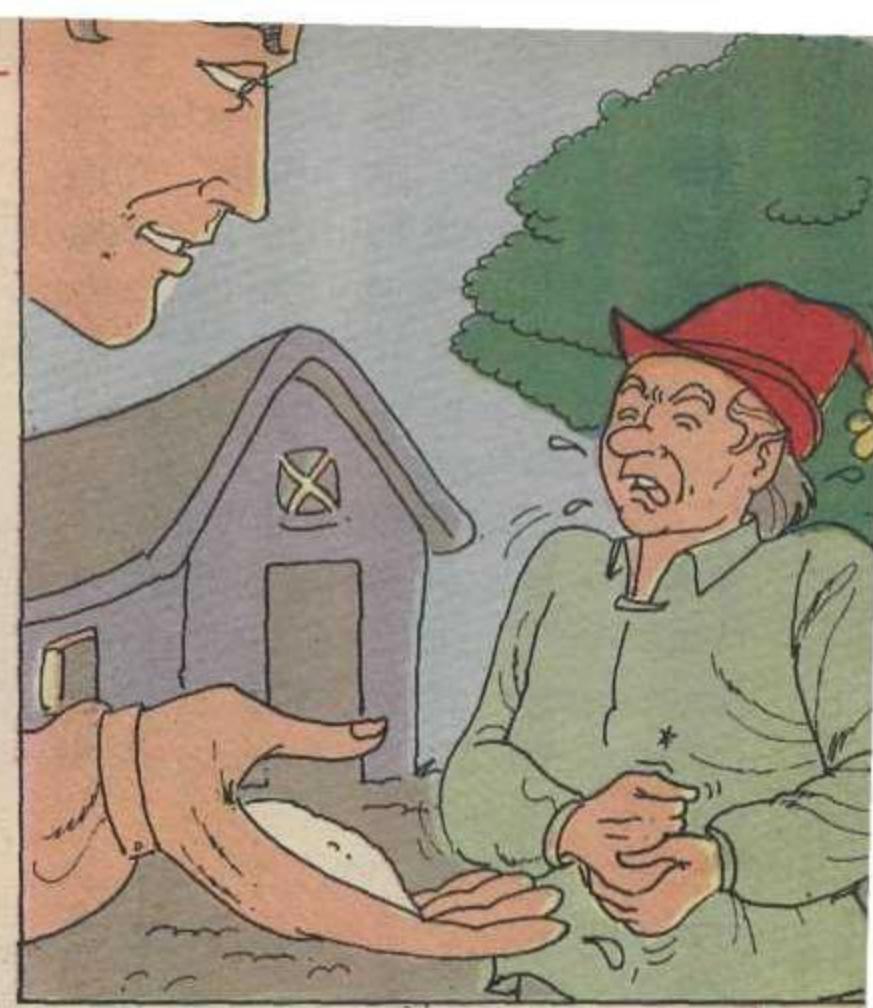
The miller pretended to draw out the stone from his pocket and taking a deep breath, squeezed it in his hand. Some drops of water did trickle down from between his fingers. He opened his fist and displayed a white creamy substance.

"You see," he said with a flair, "I've not only broken, but crushed the stone into a paste." Luckily, that morning, he had slipped some cheese into his pocket for lunch.

"It seems you're a magician!" exclaimed Teimko.

"I'm no magician," laughed Polky. "It's just that I'm stronger than you."

"Now, how about throwing a stone? I can lance it farther than anyone in the village," boasted the dwarf. Picking up a stone, he hurled it high into the air and it fell indeed very, very far off. "Now try beating



me in this," challenged Polky jubilantly.

He picked up a stone, tossed and balanced it a couple of times, then as a bird darted past them, he pretended to throw it with all his strength. "There, see that. Now we can't ever find the spot where it fell. Such was its speed!" he said.

The gnome looked on in utter amazement. In fact, he had glimpsed something moving rapidly in the air and getting lost in the clouds. Gathering himself up, he said, "You may be a wizard, but I bet you can't throw this axe of mine any farther than I can."



The miller took the axe and pretended to feel its weight. "Okay, now just watch, Teimko. I'll throw it right up into the sky and lodge it on that grey patch of cloud."

"Then I'll never be able to get it back from there," cried the gnome.

"Well, indeed you might not recover it. Not unless the cloud bursts with the impact and your blessed axe comes down with the hailstones," said Polky, getting ready to hurl it.

"Stop, please don't throw it. I've got just one precious tool left with me," begged Teimko and snatched it from his friend's hand. "Now I'm really convinced that you're a wizard."

"You're wrong once again, Teimko," laughed his friend. "I'm neither a wizard nor a magician. I'm just stronger than you are, that's it. You've got to admit it now."

Teimko at last did admit. From

that day onwards he turned into a very humble little gnome and boasted no more.

Years rolled by. Teimko had become old and no one knew his age. One day, he was not to be seen. The whole hamlet looked for him everywhere but failed to find him.

His many-hued dress, the long red cap with a flower dangling from its tip, and the sackfuls of gold and silver were all there in his hut. But the wee little gnome had disappeared as mysteriously as he had appeared one day on the shore of the pretty little lake.

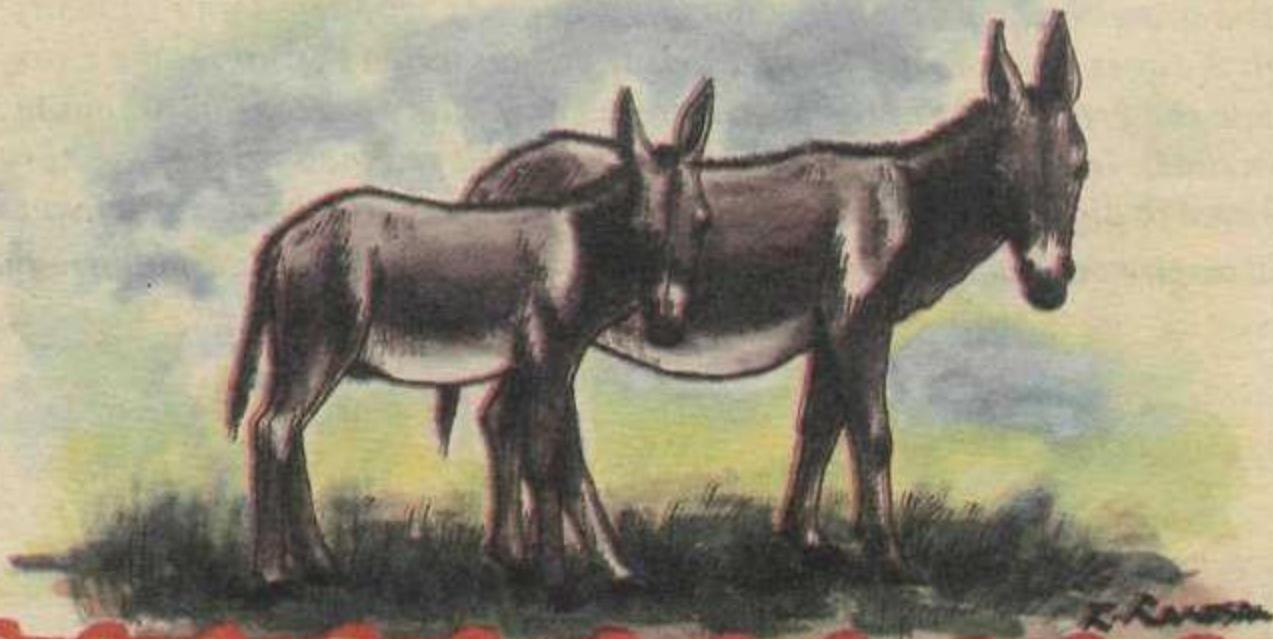
The townsfolk wondered and still are wondering whether he was stupid in his wisdom or wise in his stupidity, the dwarf who had befriended them once upon a time.

The saddest of them was the miller.

— Retold by Anup Kishore Das



CHANDAMAMA SUPPLEMENT - 50



BIRDS AND ANIMALS OF INDIA

Asses with horse-sense

"Don't make an ass of yourself!" — is a chiding elders are fond of using against children whenever they *feel* that the kids are being stupid. The idiom has come to stay, but there is no truth in that statement, because asses are not stupid! They are among the most intelligent creatures. If you keep an ass as a pet (you may not dare, being afraid of how your neighbours will react!) you will find that it responds to your affectionate word or gesture. As they belong to the same stock as horses, asses too are endowed with 'horse-sense', though they may appear rather shy — of human beings.

The wild ass is something peculiar to India, seen mostly in the Rann of Kutch in Gujarat. The Rann is salt wasteland covering about 1,000 square miles. In olden times, these animals could be found even upto Persia (now Iran) and Syria, where they are extinct.

About 4ft (110 - 120 cm) high, the Asiatic Wild Ass has a coat of fawn or a pale chestnut. An erect dark brown mane extends along the back up to the tail. The lower parts are white. The ears are shorter than those of the more common donkeys, which are shorter in height. A variety known as the Tibetan Wild Ass, seen in the Ladakh region of Kashmir, is more of a reddish grey. The wild ass is wary of human beings and, when approached, gallops at a speed of almost 55 km per hour, braying in contempt as if to say : "There! I've made an ass of you!"

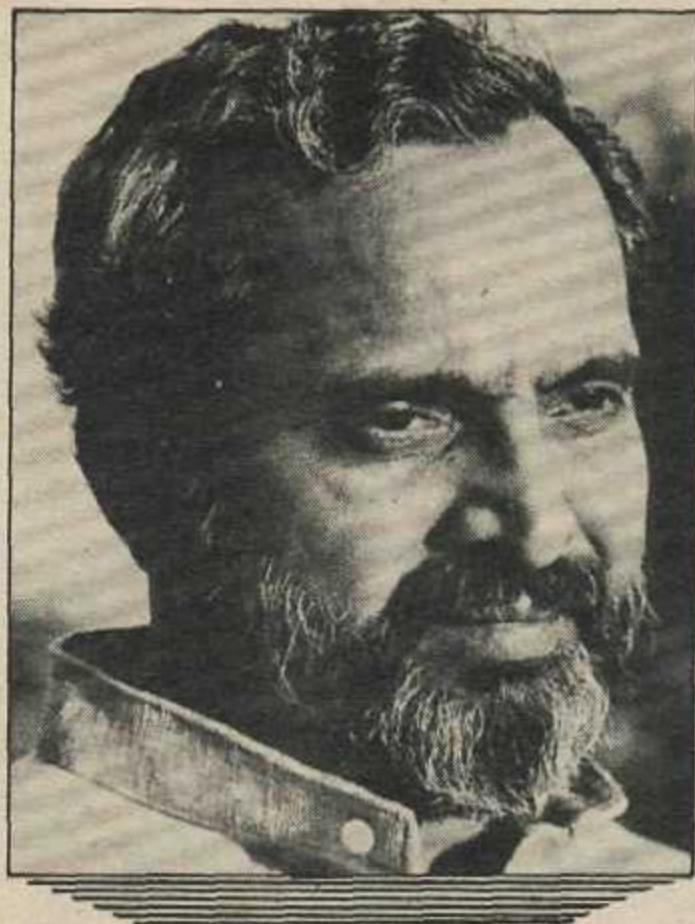


INDIA THROUGH HER LITERATURE

India is a great country which has nurtured so many languages and so many cultures through the ages. Each major language of India has a rich literature. We know more or less about the great books of the past. But we know little about the outstanding books of our own times. In these pages, Chandamama will tell you the stories of the novels of our age, written in different Indian languages. The narration will be very brief, but we hope, this will inspire our readers to read the full book in original or in translation in the future.

— Editor

"SANSKARA": A STORY OF TRADITION VERSUS PASSION



Agrahar in Karnataka is a village of many orthodox Brahmins. One of them is Praneshacharya. He is a strict moralist and is well-versed in the scriptures.

His wife is paralysed. He looks after her most dutifully.

Opposite in nature is Naranappa, who has broken every code of conduct which a good Brahmin should observe. He takes alcohol, eats meat, and shows respect to none. He has a beautiful mistress named Chandri.

Naranappa dies all of a sudden. Chandri brings the news to Praneshacharya and requests him to arrange for the funeral.

This raises a vital question. Naranappa was almost an outcaste. Can the pious Brahmins touch the corpse and perform such of those rites that should go with a departed Brahmin?





Chandri places her ornaments at the disposal of the Brahmins so that they do not neglect the dead body. But the Brahmins are hesitant. Praneshacharya delves deep into the scriptures to find a solution to the problem. He finds none. He asks Chandri to take back her ornaments. He then goes to the temple of Maruti (Hanuman) and prays for some direction. He does not receive any. On his

way back home, he comes across Chandri who is waiting for him. He is full of sympathy for her, and she is full of respect for him. As she bows down to him, he embraces her. He has fallen in love with her.

But after that, can he claim that he is a good, morally upright Brahmin? He cannot.

Chandri keeps up her efforts to dispose of Naranappa's corpse. She goes to some lower caste people and offers them money. But they refuse to do anything, for, they fear that a Brahmin's body will be defiled by their touch. And as a consequence, they will become sinners.

Chandri takes the help of a Muslim friend and burns Naranappa's dead body. By the time some of the Brahmins decide to perform his funeral, it is all over.

Praneshacharya's wife dies. He leaves home—as a wanderer—as if to escape from his own guilt.

Sanskara by U.R. Anantha Murthy (born 1931) is a remarkable Kannada novel of our time. It exposes the superstitions that pass on as morality. It shows human characters in their raw reality. Praneshacharya's deviation indirectly points at the fact that a mere external discipline does not change one's nature, unless there is an inner spiritual transformation.

DO YOU KNOW?

1. There is only one rock-cut Jain temple in South India. Where is it?
2. How did the flying snake get its name?
3. Which is the highest flowering plant in the world?
4. Who invented the refrigerator?
5. An Indian river has four different names. Which is that river, and what are the names?
6. Who was the first Greek to build a library of books?
7. A disciple of Guru Nanak kept company with him during his wanderings, playing the *rabab* while Nanak sang. Name him.
8. What is the average rate of respiration?
9. Name the highest peak south of the Vindhya.
10. In which sport do the winners go backwards and the losers forwards?

Answers

1. In Sittanavasal, Pudukkottai district, Tamilnadu. It was built some 1,400 years ago at the instance of the Pallava King, Mahendravarman I, who was a Jain by birth. He later became a Shavite.
2. It flattens its body like a ribbon and salts in the wind like a glider, between 3. The Ermania Himalayensis grows in the Garhwal ranges in U.P. at a height of 6,400 metres.
4. "The Lime and Friedrich Schipper, of Munich, in Germany, invented a ammonia - cooled refrigerator in 870s.
5. The Brahmaputra is called Tsang Po in Tibet, Dibang and Siong in 870s.
6. Eunipides (480 - 406 B.C.)
7. Mariana, the Muslim servant of an Afghan Chieftain, who kept Nanak as his accountant. When the Chieftain died, he became a disciple of Nanak, whose other disciple was a Hindu named Balu.
8. The average rate is 15 to 18 times, which can increase when you get excited or are doing physical exercises.
9. Anamudi or Elephants Peak in the Western Ghats in the Malabar region of Kerala. It has a height of 2,700 metres.
10. Judo





New Tales of King Vikram and
the Vampire

Statecraft

Dark was the night and weird the atmosphere. It rained from time to time: gusts of wind shook the trees. Between thunderclaps and the moaning of jackals could be heard the eerie laughter of spirits. Flashes of lightning revealed fearsome faces.

But King Vikramaditya did not swerve a bit. He climbed the ancient tree once again and brought down the corpse. However, as soon as he began crossing the desolate cremation ground with the corpse lying on his shoulder, the vampire that possessed the corpse spoke: "O King, you seem to be making untiring efforts and without respite as if you wish to achieve something. I pity you. Instead of enjoying a comfortable sleep on a cozy bed, you're still coming after me. I admire your tenacity, but believe me, mere efforts will not be enough to achieve one's purpose. One must be clever to take a decision after weighing the pros and cons. One must know statecraft.





I'm reminded of King Vijayapal. You may listen to his story." The vampire then began the narration.

Long ago, Vijayapuri was being ruled by Veerapal. He did not care much for the people or their welfare. He led a life of pleasure. On his sudden death, his son Vijayapal ascended the throne and took over governance. Unlike his father, he loved his subjects and ensured that they did not suffer from any wants. He soon found out that as his father did not take any interest in ruling the kingdom, he had failed to notice the activities of his corrupt officials. Vijayapal, therefore, wished to

improve matters and save the kingdom.

The neighbouring countries had been watching Vijayapuri heading towards anarchy and were planning to attack the kingdom. While Vijayapal struggled to bring some order in the land, he also sensed that there were threats from within the kingdom itself. They came from his vassal, the ruler of Virpur who, Vijayapal was told, was about to declare independence. The king of adjacent Mallapur was, at the same time, fishing in troubled waters and marking his time to attack Vijayapuri.

Vijayapal sent for his Chief Minister. "Rai Sahib, we seem to have a lot of problems. I'm afraid our subjects are not happy with our administration. There's enough to deal with within the kingdom. Now, we're faced with threats from the neighbouring countries as well. Virpur is going to break away from Vijayapuri, and Mallapur, I hear, has kept its army in full alert for an impending attack on us. How can we sort out these matters?"

"I can think of one sure way, your majesty," replied the Chief Minister. "You must marry Mandakini, the princess of Mallapur. The com-



bined strength of Vijayapuri and Mallapur will put a damper on the ruler of Virpur and whatever he's planning. He won't dare raise the voice of independence."

"Do you think this is possible, Rai Sahib?" Vijayapal was not fully convinced. "I don't think the King of Mallapur will agree to such an alliance, when he really wants to subdue Vijayapuri. Besides, Mandakini is an arrogant girl. She may not accept a proposal if it goes from me. Our whole purpose will then be defeated!"

"The indication that I got from our spies," assured the Chief Minister, "is that Mandakini wishes to marry you, your majesty."

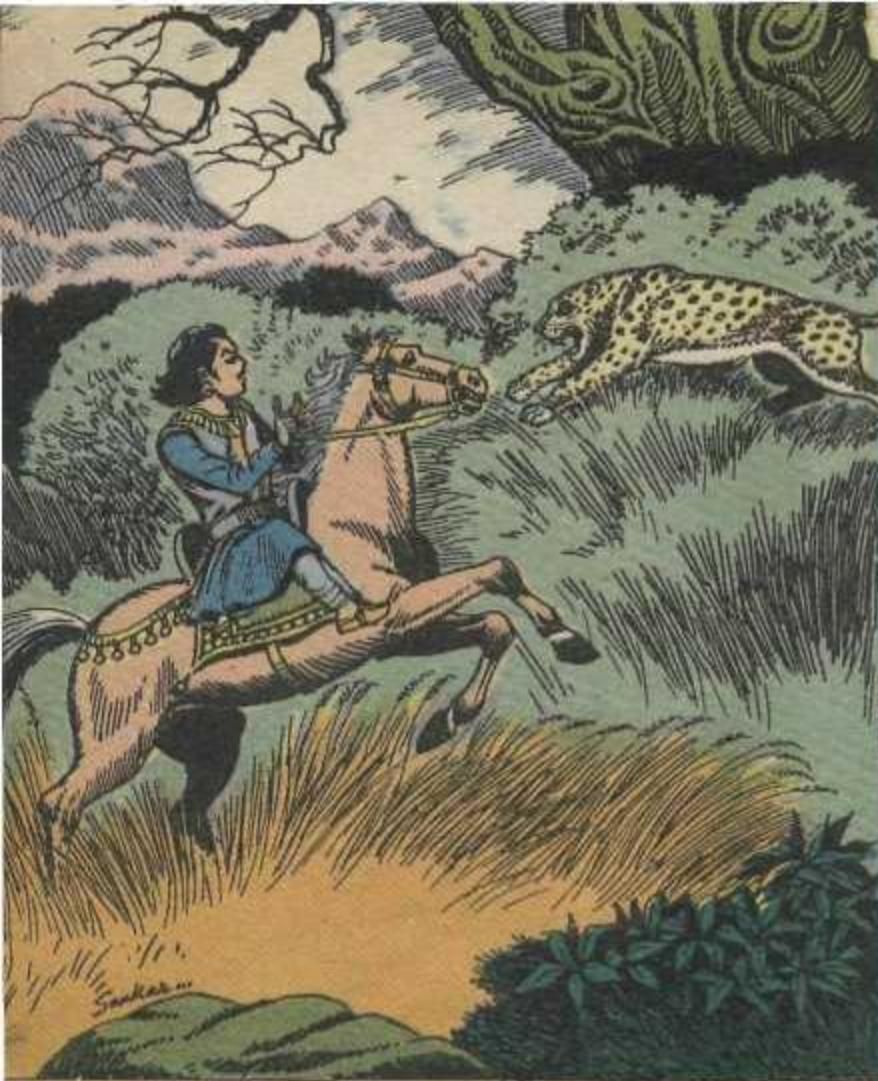
"Is that so?" said Vijayapal with a smile on his face. "All right, we shall consider this matter in detail later." After sending away the Chief Minister, the king rode his horse to his guru's *ashram* at the outskirts of the kingdom. Just before he reached the ashram, a leopard crossed their way, making the horse run hither and thither. Vijayapal found it difficult to control the horse, which was now running helter-skelter.

As the horse galloped aimlessly, Vijayapal heard a strange voice and, wonder of wonders, the horse



stopped in its tracks. He knew someone had sent out a signal to halt the runaway horse. The people of Virpur used to employ such a method whenever their horses went astray. Vijayapal searched for the source of the voice. He came upon a youth carrying a bow and arrows. Vijayapal looked at him from head to foot. "Did you make that noise to halt my horse?" he asked the youth. "Yes," he said, adding, "you look very tired. Please take rest for a while. I shall come back presently."

Vijayapal was impressed by the way the young man spoke and carried himself. But, wasn't the voice



that of a woman? he wondered. Could he be someone related to the King of Virpur? He decided to find out when the youth returned as he rested beneath a shaded tree.

The young man came back carrying milk in one hand and fruits in the other. "I've a hunch that you've recognised me. That's why you thought of these courtesies. I would like to reward you. If you go with me to my palace, I shall give you a job in my *durbar*."

The youth smiled. "Sire, I didn't extend any courtesy in expectation of any reward. I was only doing my duty."

"That means you're one of my subjects from Virpur!" remarked Vijaypal. "So, you'll obey my command, won't you?" he commanded.

"Your guess is not far from right," said the young man. "I am in disguise, still you guessed my identity correctly. I'm Vinodini, daughter of the ruler of Virpur. You wanted to find out how I'll react, that's why you pretended as if you didn't know who I am."

"The way you walked and your voice really gave you away, Vinodini," said Vijaypal. "I was able to recognise your proud looks and surmised that you could be from royalty. It's time for me to go. May I take leave?"

Vinodini was not willing to let him go from her. "Not so soon, O King! Please come with me, I want to take you to a particular place." She then led him to a place where there was an idol of a goddess. "She is our family deity; very powerful. Whatever you wish will be fulfilled if you were to worship her."

Vijaypal prostrated before the idol. When he stood up, he turned to Vinodini and said, "You must come to this spot exactly after sixty days." He then got onto his horse and rode away.



In the next two months, Vijayapal was able to catch all corrupt officials and punish them. He rounded up several thieves and robbers and put them in jail. He brought order in administration. Peace and tranquillity prevailed in the kingdom and people heaved a great sigh of relief.

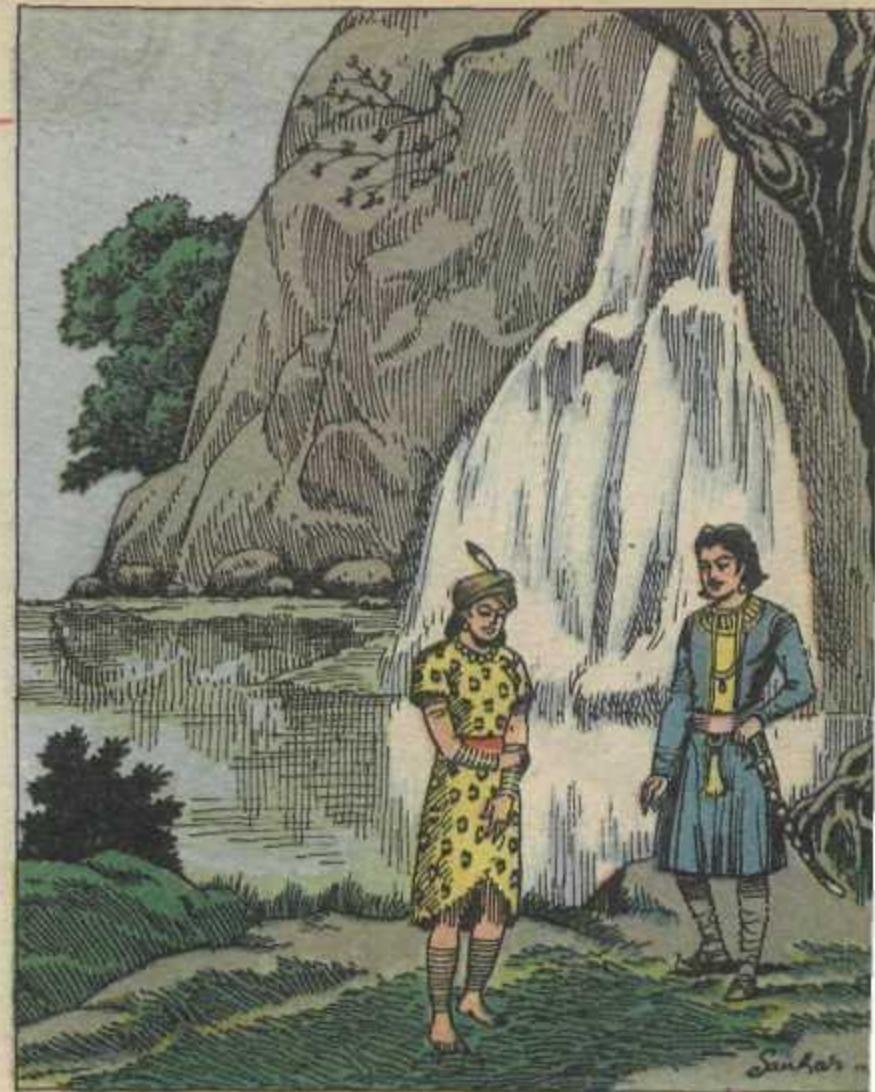
On the sixty-first day, he rode towards the appointed place, to express his gratitude to the goddess. Vinodini was very much there; she had again donned herself in male attire.

"Vinodini, by the grace of your goddess, I've been able to solve all the problems that beset my country and bring peace which my people had been yearning for several years. All because you brought me here to the goddess. I don't know how I should express my gratitude to you. I wish you came with me to my country, married me, and became my queen."

Vinodini listened to him in silence. "I can guess your thoughts, Vinodini," Vijayapal continued. "Maybe you wish that I followed the proper formalities?"

She raised her head and merely said, "Yes."

"If that is your wish, Vinodini," Vijayapal agreed, "I shall await your



father in my palace. Be assured that I shall receive him with due honours and know his wish in the matter. Then only I shall marry you."

A few days later, instead of the King of Virpur, his son went to Vijayapuri with a lot of gifts, and requested Vijayapal to accept his sister as his wife. Vijayapal received him with due courtesies and accepted the proposal. Soon afterwards, Vijayapal wed Vinodini on an auspicious day.

The ruler of Virpur abandoned the idea of declaring independence from Vijayapuri. Vijayapal led the combined army of the two king-



doms and challenged the King of Mallapur, defeated him, and annexed Mallapur. "I shall not ask for the return of my kingdom," pleaded the King of Mallapur. "I'm also not bothered that I've been defeated in war. However, my anxiety is about my daughter, Mandakini, who has been waiting for you to marry her. So, my only plea is that you should take her as your queen at the earliest."

Vijaypal acceded to his request and married Mandakini and made her his queen. He thus became the ruler of Vijayapuri, Virpur, and Mallapur.

The vampire concluded the story there and turned to King Vikramaditya. "While his father had abandoned administration to indulge in a life of pleasure, Vijaypal made all efforts to secure peace for and order in his kingdom. That did not require any statecraft, only tireless effort. However, when you interfere in the affairs of your neighbouring countries, you've to employ statecraft. I don't think, Vijaypal made use of any statecraft. He knew that Mandakini wished to marry him, yet he did not pursue the matter. On the contrary, he had no hesitation in marrying Vinodini. He believed Mandakini was arrogant, still he married her subsequently. Vijaypal had a wavering mind. What exactly did he try to achieve? You know the answers, but you may refuse to spell them out. Beware, your head will be blown to pieces!" the vampire warned the king.

Vikramaditya did not think long before he replied the vampire. "Vijaypal had all the qualities of an efficient ruler. More than the problems with his neighbours, he wished to set right things in his own kingdom first. He gave priority to the affairs of Vijayapuri, though his Chief Minister suggested that he



could marry Mandakini and purchase peace with Mallapur. Vijayapal did not accept that shortcut. He came to the conclusion that he should first win the confidence and support of his own subjects. He punished all those officials who were oppressing the people. He rounded up thieves and robbers. Vinodini revealed her desire to marry him and took him to offer prayers to her family deity. Knowing her desire, he married her. On the other hand, Mandakini kept her desire to herself. Perhaps she expected her father to defeat Vijayapal in battle and then force him to marry her. Everything happened contrary to her wish;

her father was defeated, and he had to plead to Vijayapal to take his daughter as his wife. Vijayapal had the magnanimity to agree to his request. He first solved the problems facing his kingdom, then he married the princess of Virpur and with the help of the combined army, he defeated Mallapur and became king of that country as well. It is, therefore, very clear that Vijayapal was an expert in statecraft."

The vampire realised that King Vikramaditya had outwitted him again. He flew back to the ancient tree, taking the corpse with him. The king drew his sword and went after the vampire.

A laughing child is the best portrait of happiness.

Necessity does the work of courage.



THE WORLD OF NATURE



Symmetry in leaves

How symmetrical are two halves of the butterfly's body! So also are leaves. If you cut the leaf along the middle vein, you will get two identical parts. Leaves are also constant in shape. There are some exceptions, too. Like the sassafras of North America. It has leaves of three different shapes on the same branch.



Head First

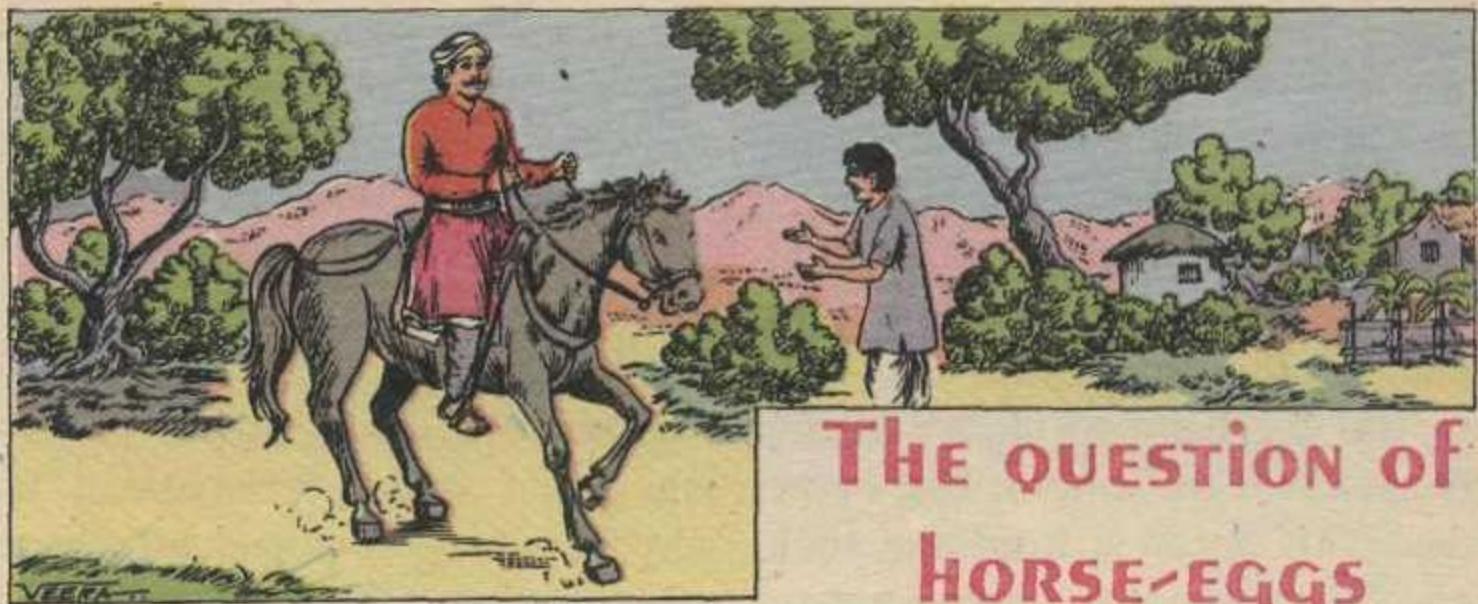
Snakes like to catch their prey live. They kill it by constriction or poison. The snake coils itself around the body (of the victim) and then poisons it. After making sure that its prey is dead, it reaches for its head and begins feeding from head downwards—always. If the victim is a large animal with a lot of bones, the snake takes the help of a tree or a branch, around which it coils so as to crush the bones of the victim it has swallowed.



Faster than submarine

The penguin can be seen only in the Antarctic region. Though a bird, it cannot fly. However, it can move in water faster than a submarine. The Emperor Penguin is capable of reaching depths up to 870 ft and of remaining submerged for even 20 minutes.





THE QUESTION OF HORSE-EGGS

Merchant Ponnambalam was on his way to the town for some business purposes. Before he reached there, it suddenly became dark and he decided to stay for the night in the village on the way. He was accosted by a drunkard. "I'm an alcoholic. Today, I don't have enough money and I need twenty rupees badly. Will you oblige me?"

Ponnambalam took pity on him and gave him twenty rupees. He walked his horse for some distance and came upon a decent house. He asked the owner permission to stay there overnight. He agreed. Ponnambalam tied his horse to the bamboo cluster near the gate, went inside, and slept well.

However, some surprise was in store for him when he woke up. He found that the houseowner had untied his horse and mounted it. "What's

the meaning of this?" asked Ponnambalam, seeking an explanation. "Where are you going on *my* horse? I myself have to proceed to the town. You would better get down."

"Did you say *your* horse?" said the houseowner nonchalantly. "Don't you know that these bamboos lay an egg every day and a horse comes out of it? This is *my* horse. And you're claiming it as yours. What audacity! Is this how you repay my hospitality? If you don't believe what I say, you may ask the neighbours."

"This is nothing but cheating!" said Ponnambalam. "Was this your motive in allowing me to stay here? I shall not part with my horse," he added categorically.

Their quarrel attracted the neighbours. They were equally dishonest like the houseowner. So, naturally, they took his side. Ponnambalam



was adamant, but he had no other go except to lead the houseowner to the village chief to decide their dispute. He asked the houseowner as to what happened, after the complaint was made by Ponnambalam.

"Sir, the bamboo cluster in my house gives me a horse-egg every day. This horse is from one such egg," explained the houseowner. "Many villagers can vouchsafe this fact. Shall I bring some of them?"

"Do you have any witnesses to say that this is your horse?" the village chief asked of Ponnambalam.

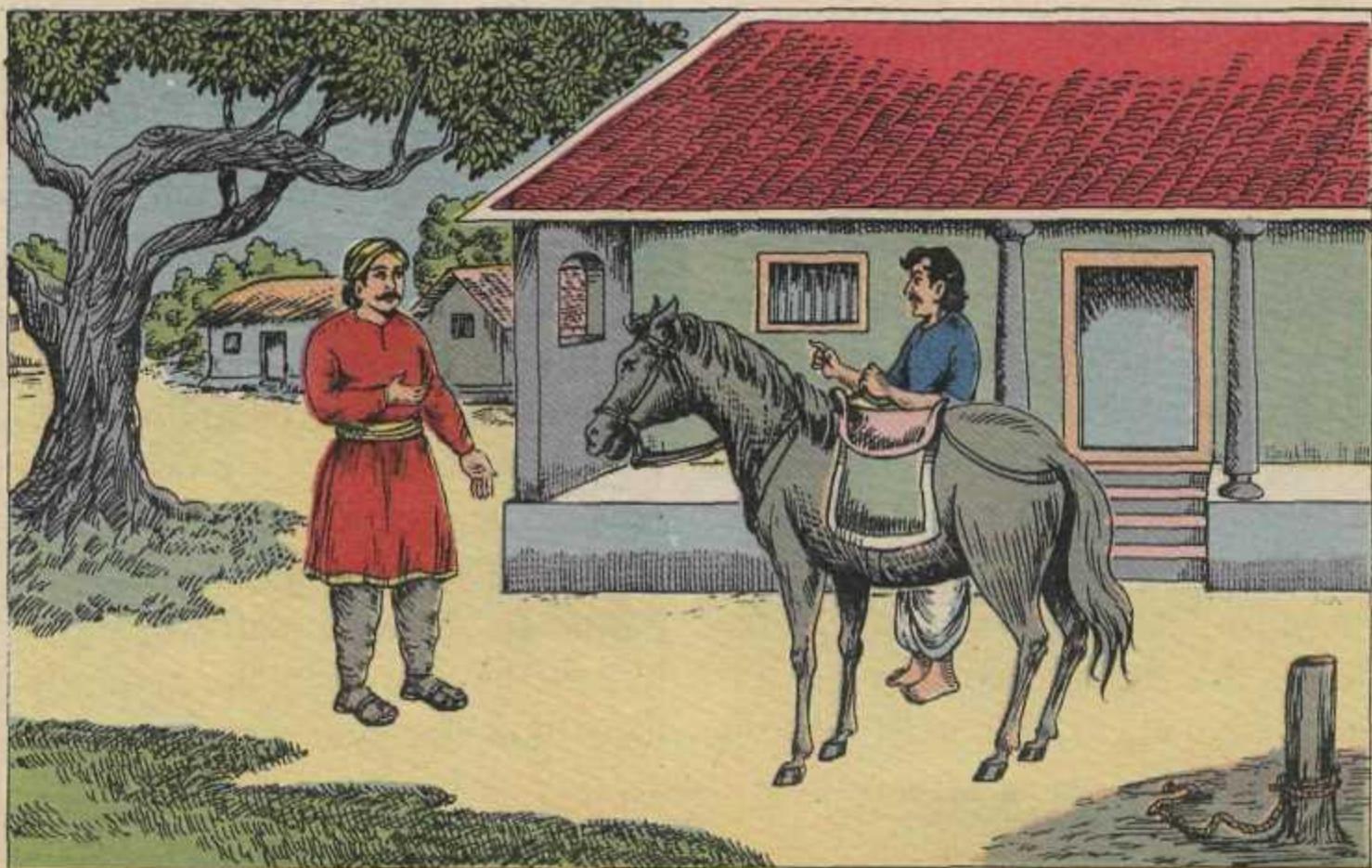
"There's one person who has seen me last night riding this horse," replied Ponnambalam. The village chief then asked both Ponnambalam

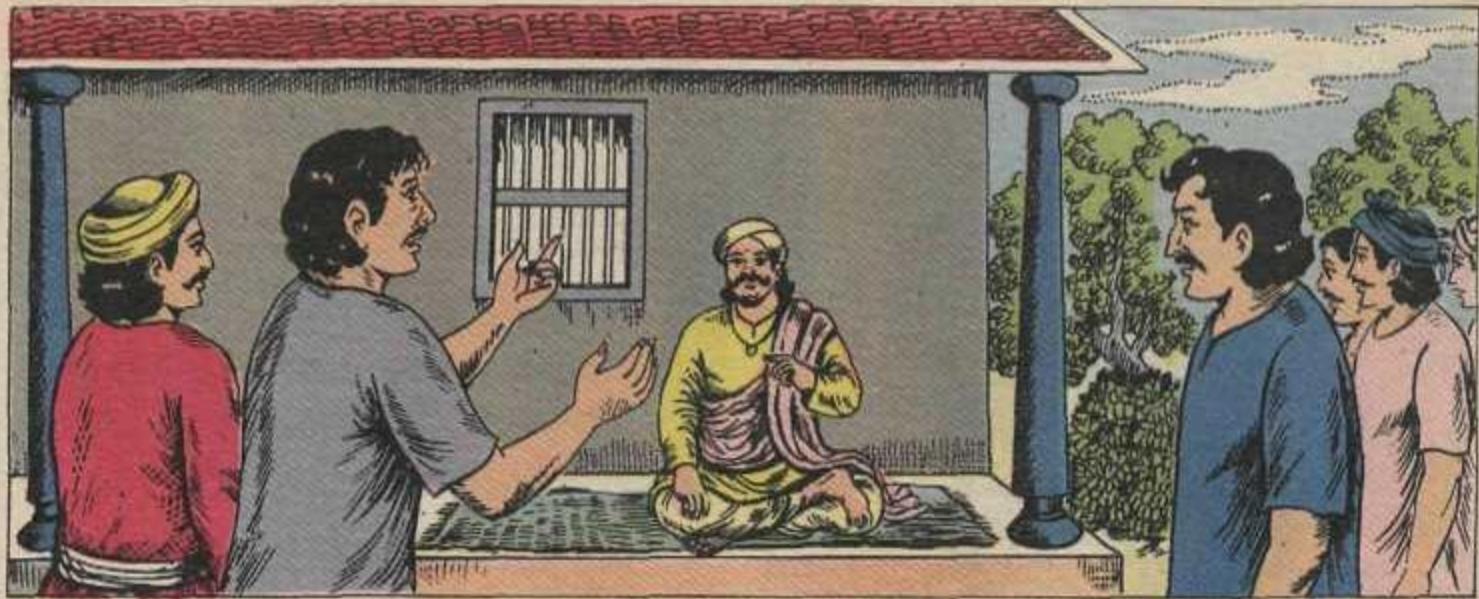
and the houseowner to produce their witnesses. The latter brought his neighbours, who corroborated that the horse was the houseowner's.

Ponnambalam searched for the drunkard to whom he had given twenty rupees. The moment the village chief saw him, he remarked, "Is he your witness? I've seen him tipsy several times. Is he ever in his senses?"

"I'm fully conscious now, sir," the man assured the village chief. "I was doing some hard work yesterday, and that kept me busy all through the night. I didn't have any time even to dream of drinks."

"Tell me, what hard work were you doing last night?" prompted the





village chief.

"I was frying the fish in the village pond on a wooden plank placed in the water. You've no idea how difficult the exercise was!" replied the man, much to the amusement of the people around the village chief.

"Ah! That shows you're still far away from your senses," observed the village chief, angrily. "Did you come here to utter such nonsense? Frying fish in the pond!"

"No, sir, what I said is not nonsense, and I'm in my full senses," the man reassured the village chief. "Tell me, sir, do you want to believe that bamboos can lay horse-eggs? Isn't that utter nonsense?"

The village chief hung his head in shame. He was ashamed that he was not intelligent enough to see through the houseowner's game. He pronounced that the horse belonged to merchant Ponnambalam.

"Now, Mohan," said the teacher, "suppose your phone rings in the middle of the night," what might it mean?

"Ma'am," he replied, "that means the telephone bill has been paid."



SPORTS SNIPPETS



A 'glorious' retirement

For eight years, she wore the crown—of the world's top woman squash player. Susan Devoy of New Zealand won her fourth World Open Championship in Vancouver, Canada, on October 10 and gave the world a surprise—that she was retiring! When she beat Australia's Michelle Martin 9-4, 9-6, 9-4, Susan was hailed as one of the best in the history of squash. She took her first world title in 1984 in Dublin and retained the title in Auckland (1986), and Australia (1990). In between, she lost her title in Netherlands in 1988. That was mainly because she tired herself by walking solo in New Zealand for over two months to raise funds for combating muscular dystrophy in her homeland. Incidentally, it was only a fortnight earlier that Jahangir Khan of Pakistan, Number One in men's World Open, announced his retirement after walk-

ing off during a second round match in Johannesburg because of a back injury. However, Devoy's decision came in the midst of a blaze of glory.

The 'Kotnis' connection

Thanks to 16-year-old Nirmala, her parents Narendra and Nandita could also visit China; and thanks to their surname, Kotnis, they all could prolong their visit by eight days. It all came about when Nirmala of Maharashtra was chosen to represent India in the



first Asian Schools Badminton Championship at Guangdong, in Canton, from August 5 to 9. The surname Kotnis electrified the officials of the Chinese embassy in Delhi, who remembered the Indian Medical Mission led by Dr. D.S. Kotnis that went to China in



1938 in the wake of the Japanese invasion. All three of them were granted visas and, at the end of the tournament came the invitation to them to stay back as honoured guests of the Chinese government. They were given an escort and a translator and taken to different places of interest, including the Shijiazhuang Park, where the Chinese have put up a monument for Dr. Kotnis who passed away during his mission. Nirmala's father happens to be a nephew of Dr. Kotnis, much revered by the Chinese.

Youngest Competitor

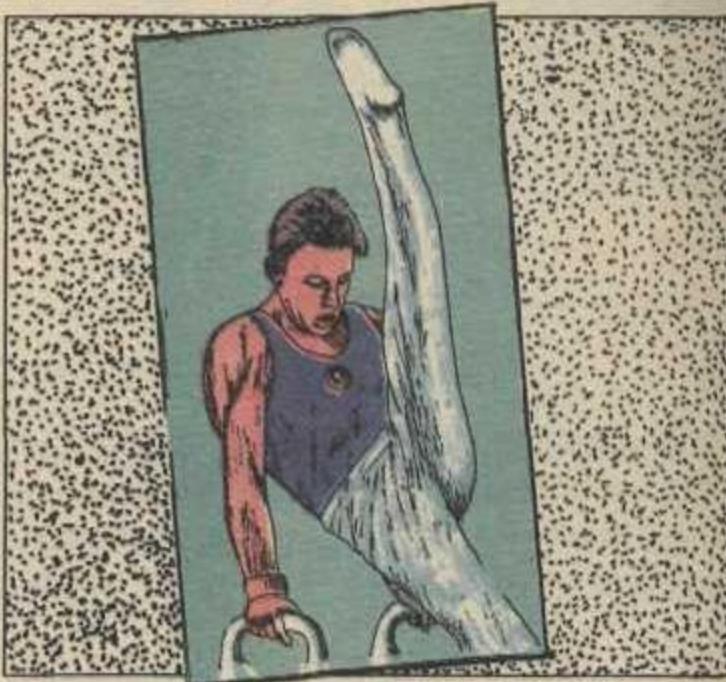
The recent National High School Chess Championship in Lexington, England,



saw the youngest competitor, 5-year-old Boris Kaidanov, compete with 11 other players for the title. The world champion Garri Kasparov dropped in during the play one day, and stopped by little Boris and made some moves, for some of which he was made to think for a long while by the tiny-tot. That should not surprise anybody, because father Kaidanov is a Grandmaster himself.

Dreams of a Gymnast

Vitaly Scherbo of Belarus (former Byelorussia) thanks his lucky stars as



he no longer represents the Soviet Union, which has ceased to exist. This gymnastics superstar, who won six gold medals in the Barcelona Olympics, feels he is now free even to dream of becoming a millionaire and possess not one but three 'automobiles'—a word he picked up during his recent visit to the U.S.A. He wishes to own a Mercedes, an Alfa Romeo, and a BMW. There's no limit to one's dreams, or is there? He intends settling down in California, though he will represent his country at the next Olympic Games in Atlanta in 1996.





VEER HANUMAN

27

(Kumbhakarna takes Sugriva a prisoner, but he manages to escape from Lanka. The Rakshasa leader fights a fierce battle with the Vanaras, but meets with his end at the hands of Rama. Ravana then sends his younger sons to the battlefield and all of them are thwarted by the Vanara leaders. The eldest of Ravana's sons, Indrajit, now gets ready for a fight.)

However much they tried, the Vanara soldiers were unable to make any dent in the strength unleashed by Kumbhakarna. The stones, boulders, and trees hurled by them were only like a strong breeze for him. They did not inflict any injuries on him. Kumbhakarna, on his part, swung his trident this way

and that, and many Vanaras fell a prey to that mighty weapon. Whenever they went near him, he also caught hold of them alive and pushed them into his mouth.

Angada and Sugriva threw huge stones at Kumbhakarna, who warded them off with his bare hands. He took a bow from one of his soldiers

MORE REVERSES FOR RAVANA



and aimed an arrow at the Vanara king. Hanuman caught it midway and broke it into pieces. Kumbhakarna then hurled a boulder and it hit Sugriva. He fell down unconscious. That was a great victory for Kumbhakarna. He carried the Vanara king to the city.

Now that they lost their king, under whose leadership would they fight? More than that, the Vanaras wondered, how would they rescue Sugriva from their enemy? Especially when they would have to get past the mighty Kumbhakarna. Their king had set out for Lanka, as he himself had received help from Rama and Lakshmana. Now he was under threat of his life. What could they do?

Hanuman pacified them. He was confident that Sugriva would manage to escape once he came out of his stupor. And it happened just as Hanuman had guessed. When Sugriva regained consciousness, he realised that he was a prisoner of Kumbhakarna. He jumped up and reached up to Kumbhakarna's ears and nose which he bit. Before the Rakshasa leader knew what was happening, Sugriva made good his escape. He flew to where Rama and the Vanara leaders were sitting be-



wildered, after Sugriva's capture by Kumbhakarna.

Kumbhakarna went back to the battlefield, very angry. He did not spare a single Vanara soldier who fought with him. Several of them lost their lives. Lakshmana went forward to fight with Kumbhakarna. But the Rakshasa evaded him and approached Rama.

They fought a fierce fight. Rama sent a shower of arrows on Kumbhakarna but none of them had any effect on him. He realised that unless he used all the power at his command, he would not be able to subdue Kumbhakarna. He also did



not want to prolong their fight with Kumbhakarna as he might cause more havoc on the Vanara army. Rama, therefore, sent a very powerful arrow, which cut off Kumbhakarna's right hand.

He then fought fiercely with his left hand. He pulled out a huge tree and hurled it at Rama, who evaded it and, with another equally powerful arrow, cut off his left hand, too. Still Kumbhakarna did not stop fighting. He advanced towards Rama menacingly and was about to kick him when Rama aimed an arrow at Kumbhakarna's legs, which fell apart. One more arrow from Rama,

and Kumbhakarna's head was severed from the body. He thus became a martyr, fighting for his brother.

The Rakshasa soldiers were terrified when they saw how Kumbhakarna was lying dead on the battlefield with the head and limbs severed from the body. They ran helter-skelter, while the Vanara soldiers jumped for joy, as one more Rakshasa leader had been done away with. The news reached Ravana, too, and he cried aloud uncontrollably. His sons, Devanandaka, Garanda, Trishira, and Atikaya, fell in deep sorrow on learning the fate of their uncle. A pall of gloom descended on Lanka.

Kumbhakarna's death was a great loss to the Rakshasas, as Ravana had reposed so much confidence in his brother. He was expecting Kumbhakarna to come back victorious, after annihilating the entire Vanara army. Instead, what came back was his body in pieces. Ravana regretted that every one of his friends, companions, relatives, why, even his sons had had to sacrifice their lives for his sake.

He now apprehended whether Lanka might even be overrun by the Vanara army. He was eager, more than ever before, to take revenge on

Rama who had killed his dearest brother. At the same time, he ruminated whether he could have saved him and all the others in Lanka if only he had listened to his brother Vibhishana's advice. He could have avoided all the losses he and Lanka had suffered.

Ravana's son, Trishira, understood his father's agony. "Should you waver like this?" the young man asked him. "After all, in battle death is not unpredictable. All our leaders who died in battle have covered themselves in glory. We should be proud of them. Let me go and kill Rama and retrieve your prestige, father."

When Ravana heard his son giving him courage, he was consoled. Though he had lost Kumbhakarna, everything was not yet lost. His valorous sons were still ready to fight to the finish. He put up a brave face and sent them to the battlefield. The four sons fought with the Vanara soldiers fiercely. At the instance of Sugriva, his son Angada engaged Narandaka in fight and soon sent him to the nether world.

A fight ensued between Angada and Mahodara, and between Hanuman and Devanandaka. The latter could not survive Hanuman's



strength and died fighting. Their deaths, one after the other, were a damper to the Rakshasa soldiers and they ran away for their life.

Ravana thus suffered one blow after another. Next he sent Atikaya. He entered the battlefield screeching vengeance. "Who's this demon?" Rama asked of Vibhishana.

"He's Atikaya, Ravana's son, born out of Dhanyamalini," replied Vibhishana. "As strong as Ravana. He has secured several boons from Lord Brahma. He possesses some powerful arrows, too. Besides, he has been blessed with a boon that he won't be killed by any Deva or Asura."



His chariot as well as his armour are a gift from Brahma. He had defeated many a Deva. He must be killed at the earliest. Otherwise, he might cause great havoc among our soldiers."

Atikaya was engaged by Kumuda, Dwitiya, Mainda, Neela and Sarabha, among the Vanara leaders. But they could not overpower him. The arrows they aimed at him were just flea-bites for Atikaya. He sent them helter-skelter and approached Rama. "If you've enough courage to fight me, come on, Rama! Let's decide who'll survive whom." He challenged Rama to a fight.

Rama looked at him nonchalantly. Atikaya thought that Rama was afraid of meeting him. "Why this hesitation, Rama?" Atikaya mocked at him. "I heard that you killed all my brothers and Lanka's commanders. Yet, you seem to be contemplating a hasty retreat from me! Don't you want to prove that you're powerful?"

Lakshmana was listening to Atikaya and he got very angry. "You show *your* strength to me, Atikaya!" he challenged the Rakshasa leader.

"To you, Lakshmana? Are you sufficiently grown up to fight with me?" responded Atikaya with a sneer. "If you've any desire for life, you better run away from my presence."

"Don't stop with verbal threats," said Lakshmana. "You should substantiate them with action." Their fight began. Soon Atikaya realised how strong Lakshmana was. So, he fought very carefully, and was able to stop all of Lakshmana's arrows midway. Lakshmana invoked the power of Brahma on an arrow, which knocked down Atikaya's head. The Vanara soldiers were overjoyed.

Atikaya's death once again brought gloom among the Rakshasas. Ravana fainted, wailing

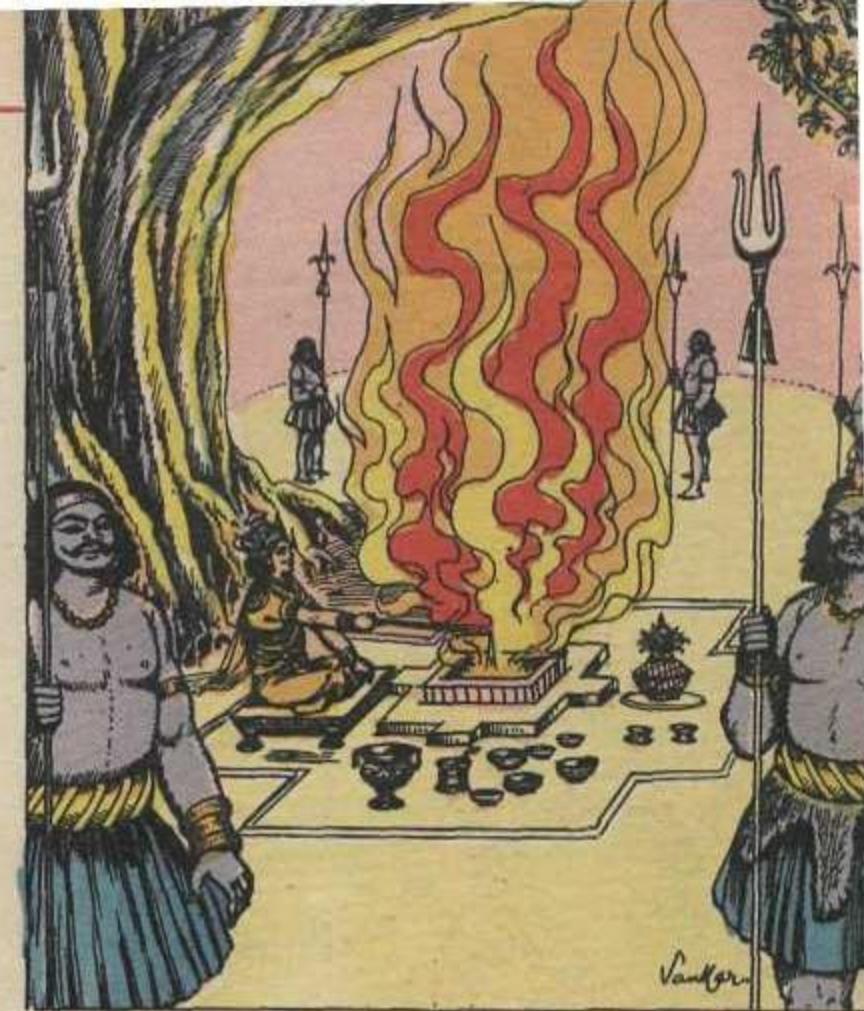


that his vow to thwart the Vanaras was coming to nought. He really feared what his fate and that of Lanka might be if all those whom he was sending to the battlefield was meeting with their end. He wondered how he was going to defeat Rama and Lakshmana.

Indrajit could not bear to see his father in deep sorrow. "Why should you worry when I'm here to serve you, father?" he tried to pacify Ravana. "No one has escaped my arrows. I shall take revenge on Rama and Lakshmana; let me go to the battlefield at this very moment."

He took leave of his father and started in his chariot drawn by specially chosen strong horses. Before reaching the battle ground, he stopped on the way to perform a *yagna* to acquire special powers. He lined up his soldiers around so that they too would benefit from the *yagna*. He then got on to the chariot once again and twanged his bow aloud challenging his enemy for a fight. The next moment, with the help of his special powers, he disappeared into the sky. His soldiers shouted with joy, and clashed with the Vanara soldiers.

Indrajit resorted to trick fight. He put an end to several Vanara soldiers.



He then turned to their leaders. Many of them, like Gandamada, Mainda, Neela, Gaja, Rishabha, Angada, and even Sugriva, suffered injuries from his arrows. If he had fought them face to face, they all would have given him a good fight. But he attacked them hiding behind clouds, and his enemy could not locate him in the sky.

Some of his arrows fell even on Rama and Lakshmana. Rama now thought of a strategy. "If he has hid himself behind clouds, we may find it difficult to fight him, Lakshmana. So, let's feign as if we've been hit by his arrows. He may then take us





dead and either leave the place or reveal himself."

But before they could do as they planned, both Rama and Lakshmana were hit by more powerful arrows and fell down unconscious. Indrajit was happy, thinking that they had fallen a prey to his arrows and returned to the city amidst victory shoutings from Rakshasa soldiers. Meanwhile, Hanuman and Vibhishana began a search in the battle-field for any survivors among their soldiers and leaders.

Vibhishana came upon Jambava. "Don't worry about me," he told Vibhishana.

"I'm all right. I only hope Hanuman is safe and is not in any danger. I'll be only too happy to hear that."

"Why are you so concerned about Hanuman alone?" queried Vibhishana.

"If Hanuman is with us, it is as good as we have a thousand armies," explained Jambava. "Hence my concern for him. He's the main pillar of our Vanara army. Without him, we've no strength."

Hanuman, who was listening to all this conversation, bowed to Jambava, who told him, "Hanuman, from now on, you've to lead the army. It's your duty to protect the soldiers."

All three of them then went up to Rama and Lakshmana, who were still lying down unconscious. Jambava remembered a good remedy for it. "Hanuman, you must cross the sea again and fly to the Himalayas. There you will find the tall Kanchana and Kailas mountains. Right in the middle is a smaller mountain which abounds in herbs. In one corner, you will find four herbs with a glow. They are Vaishalyakarani, Mritasanjivani, Sauvarnakarani, and Santanasarani. What we need is Mritasanjivani.





You may pluck that portion of the mountain and bring it over here. That herb alone can revive Rama and Lakshmana. You may go immediately."

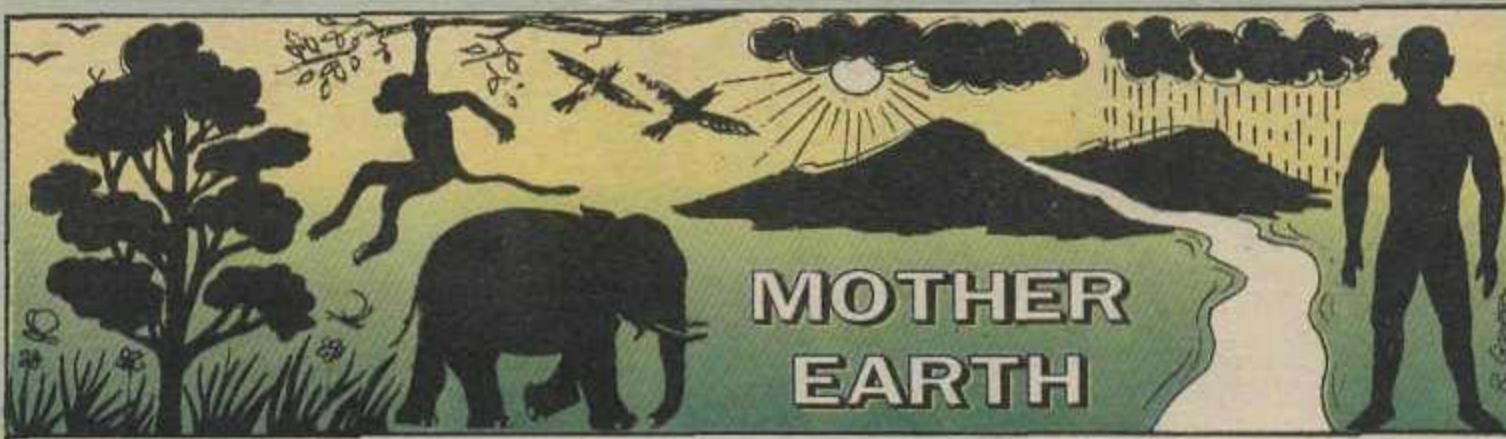
Hanuman started for the Himalayas. Once there, he came across several mountains. After a

long search among Brahmakosa, Chitrapana, Kesh Kuda, Hayagriva and Brahmakapala, he located Mount Kanchana and Mount Kailas, and the smaller mountain in the middle. He then went in search of the corner where the glowing herbs grew.

— *To continue*

SPOT THE TEN DIFFERENCES





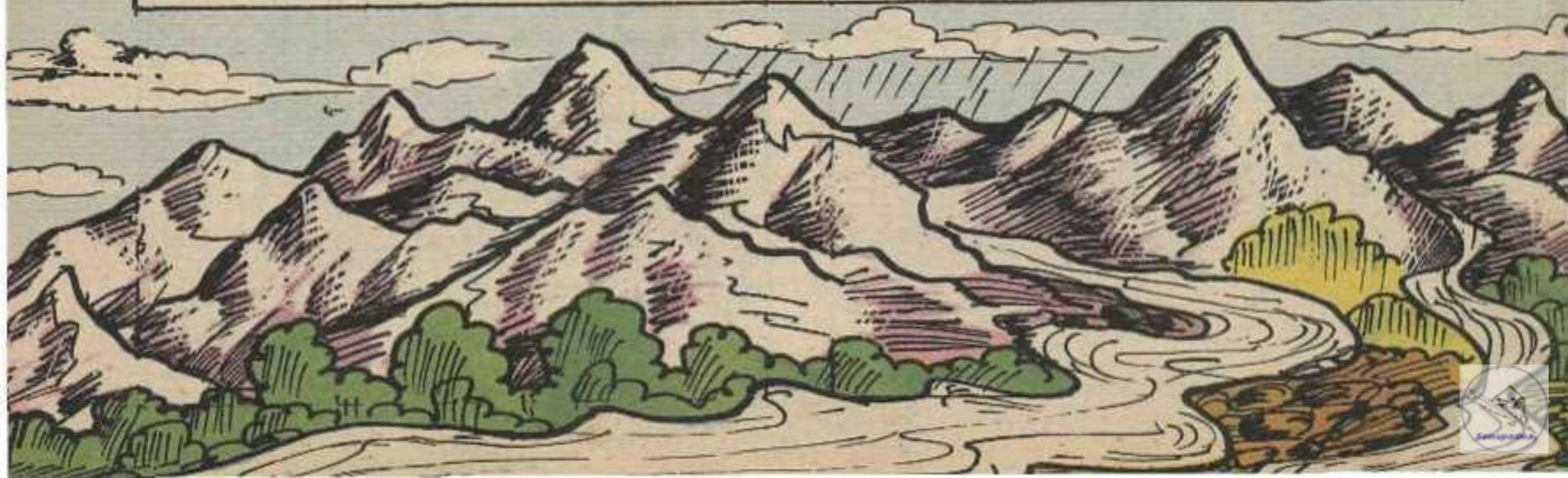
MOUNTAINS AND HILLS : WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE ?

In the last two issues of this magazine, you read about one of the great elements of Nature – water. You, of course, know what a unique role rivers have played in nurturing great civilisations.

Wherfrom do the rivers come ? Most of them flow from mountains. In India, for example, most of the famous rivers are gifts of the Himalayas. There are also the Vindhya, the Sahyadri, and other ranges of mountains to provide us with rivers.

Needless to say the rocky elevations called mountains and hills had existed long before man was born. Why do we use two different words for them ? Those elevations which are more than 6,600 feet (2,000 metres) high are mountains. Those between 1,650 to 6,600 feet (500 to 2,000 metres) are hills. Many hills, in days gone by, were mountains. Millions of years of weather and earthquakes have eroded them.

Mountains and hills or their absence have a tremendous influence on the climate of the earth. They greatly influence our physical construction and our lifestyle. Do you think we can look upon them simply as a phenomenon of Nature ? They are much more. We will speak of them again.





'VANTAGES OF VILLAGE LIFE'

Thimayya was an ordinary farmer. Being uneducated, he had often to seek the help of others to read a letter or write one. He slowly realised the value of education. So, when his only son Medappa grew up, he decided to give the boy proper education. He strained to send him to school and got him admitted to an institution in the nearest town, Tirupur.

Medappa studied well and always stood first in his class, earning good marks in his examinations. The boy completed eighth standard with a good record. Now, if he wanted to study further, he would have to join a high school in the city.

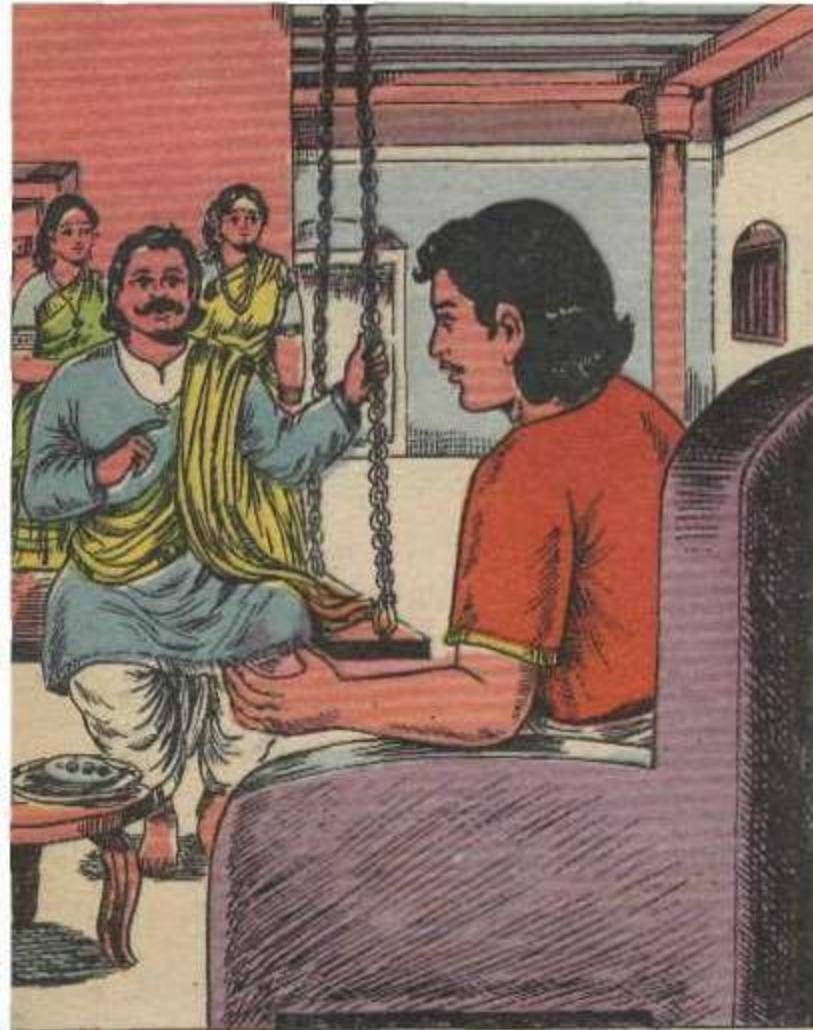
Medappa was not very sure whether his father would be able to afford any higher education for him; as he knew with what difficulty he had managed his education even up to the eighth standard. If he were to

go to the city and join a school there, the burden would be too much for his father. So, the best thing for him would be to stop his studies and help his father on the farm. He told his father of his decision.

But Thimayya did not approve of his son's decision. "Medappa, my dear son, you're the only one educated in this family. Besides, you've been doing very well in your class till now. You should, therefore, go to the city and pursue higher studies. Whatever you will need for that, I shall try to earn from our farm and send you enough money. You must study well and become a great man." Thimayya thus assured his son of all assistance.

Medappa did not argue any further and decided to proceed to the city, stay there, and continue his studies. His father periodically sent him money and Medappa completed his





to broach the subject of his marriage. "Medappa, you know very well that I've only one daughter. By the grace of god, I've enough wealth, too, which one day will be entirely hers. I was searching for a suitable person to take care of all that wealth. I couldn't find anybody till I met you, and I knew that I've found my man. I wish to make *you* my son-in-law and want you to stay back here, with all of us. Won't you accept my proposal ?"

"To be honest, sir, this has come quite unexpected," said Medappa, apologetically. "After all, I'm from an ordinary family, with little or no wealth. When that be the case, how could we ever think of an alliance with a wealthy family? I'm sure you can easily find suitable boys from equally wealthy families. My people are entirely dependant on the meagre earnings that I make. How could I then leave them in the lurch and remain here? I think you should forget the whole thing."

"Medappa! I don't discriminate between the rich and the poor, the wealthy and the not-so wealthy," assured Sundarayya. "I had given some serious thought to the proposal before I spoke to you. I was looking for an educated youth, and not

high school education as well as college studies. He then looked around for a suitable job for himself. It was during his search for the job that he got introduced to a rich merchant. Sundarayya was quite impressed by Medappa's smartness and intelligence. He thought of his own daughter and nourished a desire that he would marry her off to Medappa, so that the young man could be with him always.

Sundarayya, one day, invited Medappa to his house to attend a party. Medappa spent a happy hour with Sundarayya and his family. Sundarayya chose a good moment

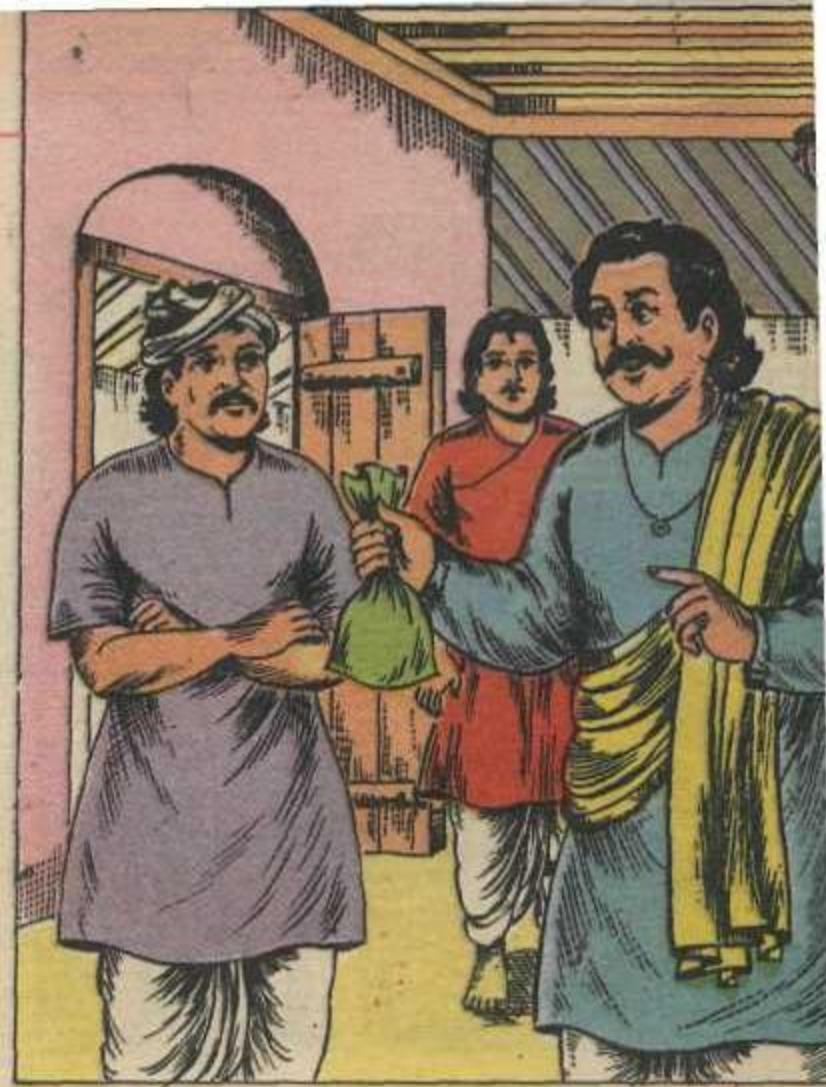


someone rolling in wealth. And I assure you, you won't have to worry about your parents; you could bring them over here; I've practically no objection to that. I only want your consent."

Shortly after that, Sundarayya accompanied Medappa to his village, and met his parents. He requested Thimayya and his wife to agree to Medappa's marriage with his daughter. "Medappa, my dear son!" said Thimayya. "We've grown old, and won't be of any help to you any longer. This is a good opportunity for you, and I feel you shouldn't reject the proposal for our sake. You must marry his daughter. We only wish to see you both living happily."

The wedding was a grand affair. Medappa and his bride stayed in Sundarayya's palatial house. He tried his best to persuade Medappa's ageing parents to come over to the city and stay with all of them. But Thimayya and his wife excused themselves, saying they would prefer to continue to live in their village.

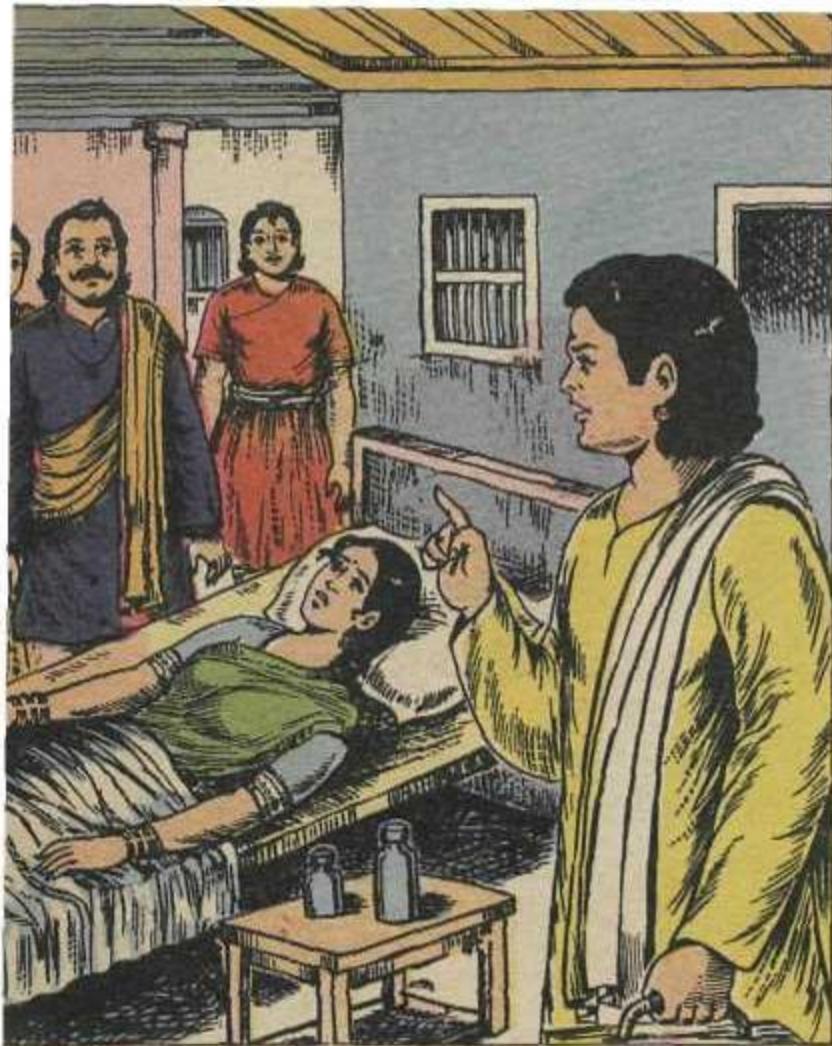
A few days later, Sundarayya told Medappa, "Now that your parents are reluctant to leave their village, I'm sending them five thousand rupees, so that they won't be put to any difficulty." This came as a



complete surprise to Medappa, and now he had a high opinion of his father-in-law.

Months passed when a physician known to Medappa's family came down from the village. Sundarayya was not at home when Narayanayya called on Medappa. "What happened to you, Medappa? You never came home after your marriage to look up your parents. Have you forgotten them? Have you forgotten your old friends?"

"I was really planning to come over, meet them and leave some money with them when my father-in-law told me he was sending them



five thousand rupees," said Medappa. "That's how I postponed my visit. I'm sure they would have got that money. I hope both of them are well."

"Money? Five thousand rupees?" exclaimed Narayanayya. "If they had received that much money, they would have been comfortable and happy."

Medappa's wife, Neela, was listening to their conversation. When she later checked up with her father, she came to know that Sundarayya had never sent any money to Medappa's parents. She was really upset over her father's behaviour.

In the next few days, Neela took ill rather suddenly. She fainted, and was unable to speak a word, nor move her limbs. Sundarayya was now a very worried father. He called in a physician. Neela took all the medicines he prescribed, yet she did not recover. Sundarayya was now afraid he might even lose his daughter.

Medappa consoled his father-in-law. "Don't worry. None of the city doctors would be able to cure her. Let me call Narayanayya from the village. He's an expert and he'll cure her of her illness." Sundarayya then sent for Narayanayya.

"Mere treatment is not sufficient," pronounced Narayanayya, after he had examined Neela. "She needs a change of place, a change of atmosphere. She must stay in a place where there is plenty of breeze and ventilation. You send her to Medappa's village. I can then look her up every now and then, and give her the proper treatment."

Sundarayya agreed to the suggestion, though with some reluctance. Medappa took his wife to his village, where old Thimayya and his wife looked after their daughter-in-law with a lot of affection.

Under their care, Neela soon





recovered from her illness completely. Moreover, she had by then fallen in love with the village and its atmosphere. She could now walk without difficulty and also talk. She grew very fond of Medappa's parents for whom she had great respect and reverence. In fact, her decision to remain in the village took no one by surprise.

One day, Sundarayya called on his daughter. "Father, I've decided

to stay in the village. I don't want to return to the hustle and bustle of city life. Why don't you and mother join us here?" she asked him.

Sundarayya could now see how well his daughter had been looked after by Thimayya and his wife. "As you wish, Neela," he told his daughter. "We shall leave the city and settle down here in the village. After all, haven't I earned enough for the future generation?"

John met Santa Claus on his way back from school. He asked the boy what he would like to have for Christmas.

"I want a train set, a construction box, a Cowboy suit, a bicycle, a toy motor car, a band group..." John said in one breath, wondering what he could add to his list.

"Okay," smiled Santa, "I'll look into my diary and see if you had been a good boy this year."

"Oh! Don't bother to look into the book," said John in a pitiable tone, "I'll have only a pencil box."





Let us know

Which is the fastest among flying birds?

— *Aparajita Chakrabortty, Dombivli*

The peregrine falcon and the spinetail swift can reach speeds of 270 km and 170 km per hour while stooping from great heights. In level flight, the ducks and geese can attain about 100 km. Incidentally, the American woodcock is the slowest—8 km. Most birds average about 60 km.

Which country has earned the epithet 'flowery land'?

— *Bhavani Shanker, Lucknow*

China is often described as the 'flowery land'.

Which was the first castle to be built in the world?

— *Khalid Nasim, Calcutta*

The castle at Gomdan, in Yemen, is reported to have been built about A.D. 100. England, Scotland and Ireland have the largest number of castles in the world, the earliest of which was built about A.D. 1000. The most famous among them is the Windsor Castle, where the British royal family normally resides.

Who was the first Speaker of the Lok Sabha?

— *Romi Kar, Imphal*

The late G.V. Mavalankar.

Readers are welcome to send such queries on culture, literature or general knowledge which should be of interest to others too, for brief answers from the Chandamama.



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- Carlyle



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